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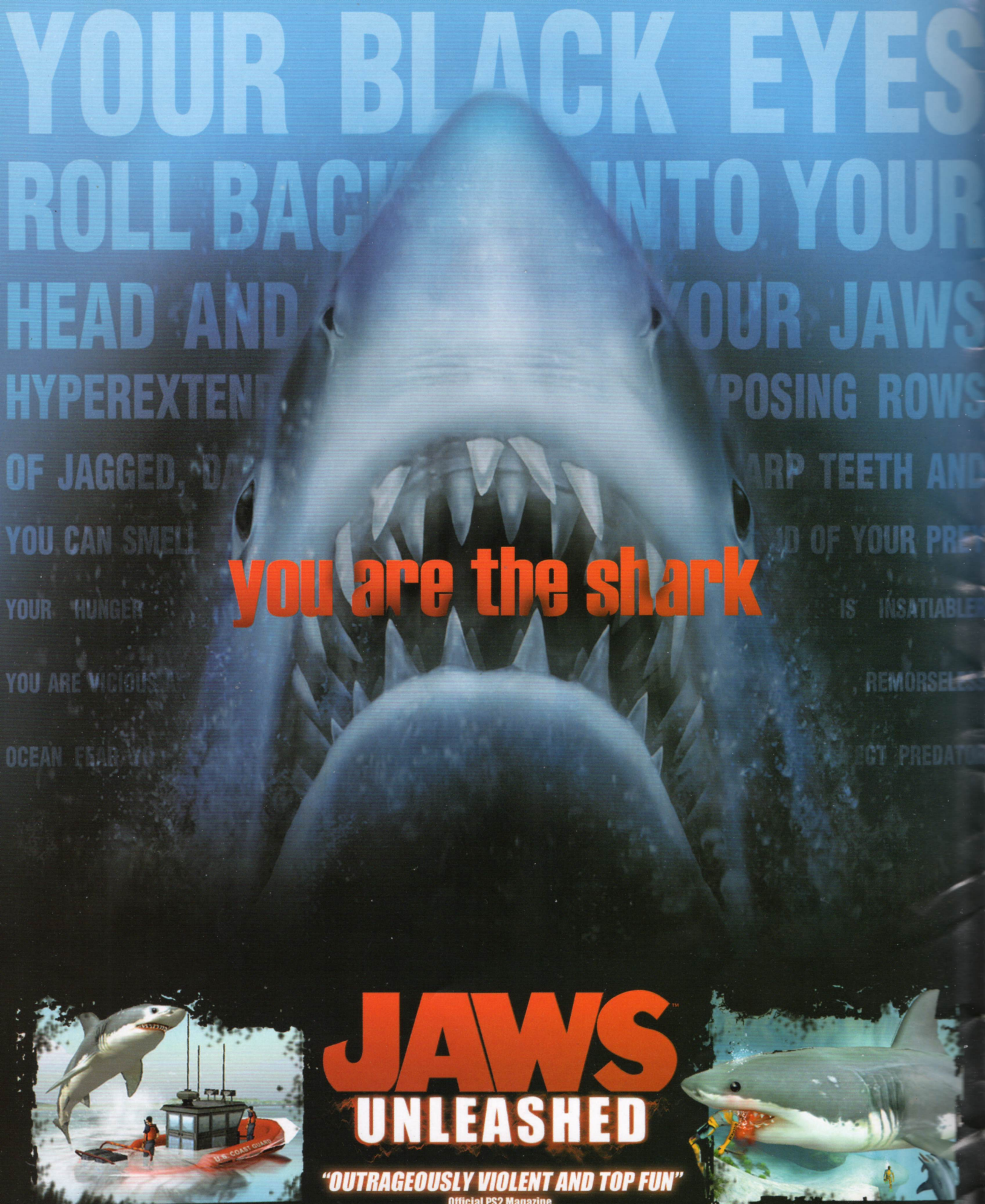

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BEST BITS!

Just some of the stand-out stuff this month in the UK's number one games mag!

TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY

P44 We replayed the original *Tomb Raider* this ish in preparation for our exclusive first peek at *Anniversary*. To tell the truth, Lara hasn't aged particularly well – we can't believe we used to lust over that blocky mess of polygons! So traveling to the London Science Museum to see Ms. Croft re-brave the terrors of the Lost Valley all over again before *that* encounter with Rexy sent a warn tingle down our spines... and down the legs of our trousers. Whoops.

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER™ ANNIVERSARY

WE GET WII!

P14 Who wants to stand around New York in the freezing cold for the best part of two days just to get hold of a Wii? Our resident Welshman, of course, and with his leek-strengthened skin, Eisteddfod-toned lungs and seven layers of lambs-wool long-johns, he was more than up to the task – heading back from the Big Apple with a massive haul of Nintendo goodies. Find out all about what he got up to (and the hardware of course) starting out on page 14...

WELCOME TO GAMESMASTER

Where were you when the console war started? I was in bed. It was 6am. I distinctly remember it because there was a timid Welsh voice on the phone telling me that he hadn't managed to get a Wii yet. My trusty Deputy Editor Geraint was there at the precise second it kicked off, as the Wii joined PS3 and Xbox 360 on the shop shelves in New York. Turn to page 14 to see how he got on. So now all three next gen consoles are out and we've just got to wait a couple of months for PS3 in the UK, what happens next? Well, it becomes all about the games. And you're in the right mag to see exactly what's coming on every console with *GM's* Most Wanted Games 2007, starting on page 22. And while we wouldn't be real gamers if weren't interested in shiny new consoles, we're not forgetting the faithful old guard either. Cover star Lara's new game is on PS2 and I'm looking forward to it as much as anything on next-generation. Have a great new gaming year – it's going to be a good one!

Robin

Robin, The Ed

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN

P62 We have to admit our early impressions of *Resistance* weren't all that great. But we're man (sorry Kath, *girl*) enough to swallow our words now that the final code has landed in our laps! The Chimera are a bloodthirsty lot, the weapons are simply *terrific* (our fave – The blaster that shoots through walls, of course) and online multi-player with 40 combatants kicking off is simply incredible. PS3 just gets better every month...

SELECT YOUR MODE

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COVER STORIES

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Lara's back! Read all about it.

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The best reason to buy a PS3 blown wide open...

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We review the best PS3 launch game!

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Mind-blowing threequel ahoy – new shots!

100% new!

PS3 and Wii are out! Check out all the details on their respective launches here. 008

Geraint went to New York for a Wii launch adventure. Exciting! 014

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Harry Potter returns! We've got the first details on *The Order of the Phoenix!*

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Gran Turismo HD – every inch the shiny car piloting simulator we'd hoped it'd be! 026

Smash Bros Brawl, hitting Pikachu with a hammer since 1999. And we love it! 026

Knocking on, but still going strong. *MGS4* makes us thank the lord for PS3! 036

Sonic and the Secret Rings shows that there's still life in the old 'hog yet! 031

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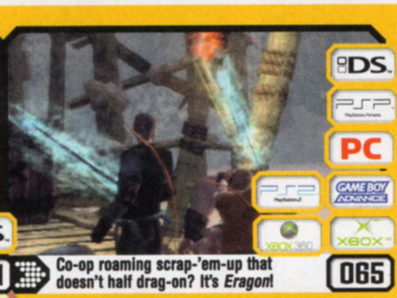

Co-op roaming scrap-'em-up that doesn't half drag-on? It's *Eragon!* 065

It's racing – but not as you know it! Off road insanity in *ExciteTruck!* 066

Swap you scalpel for remote, and go straight foir the kidney in *Trauma Center!* 077

WE LOVE GAMES

More wacky ramblings from our devoted readers. You certainly do love games! 054

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LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER™ ANNIVERSARY

Lara's greatest adventure revisited! PS2 PC PSP 046

Drifts, nitros, insane speeds? Yup, this is *Ridge Racer* alright – on PS3! 068

Mario-based platforming puzzle-action on DS. It's the *March of the Minis*! 070

Cricket 2007 knocks us for six. Well, okay, maybe a four. But it's still decent. 069

Wrestling action for the PSP! Take the *SmackDown!* wherever you go! 071

Lethal Alliance – a pocket *Star Wars* that's actually quite good! 072

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Beat the best five games Of 2006 with our top tips. We've got *Gears of War*... 088

OVER £2000 OF PRIZES TO WIN!

WIN FOUR WiiS PLUS UBISOFT'S Wii LINE-UP!

A-Z OF GAMES

Here's nearly every game featured in this issue listed for quick flicking...

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TEAM GM

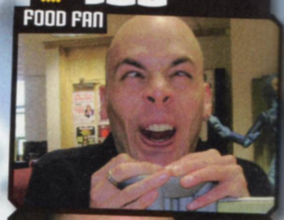
Happy New Year! And here's what gaming's first family predict for 2007...

ROBIN
THE BOSS

Jocular *GamesMaster* overlord Robin chortled cheerfully as we sweated over the huge contraption that produces *GM* every month, pausing only to crack the whip and clip Geraint around the ear. "I foresee 2007 being a good year for me! I believe you can all work approximately 17% harder. What do you think?" Kath fainted and Jes had a little cry.

PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Wii Sports' tennis. Fear my forehand!
GAME OF 2007:
Grand Theft Auto 4
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:
To become a zen master/tidy my desk

JES
FOOD FAN



PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Excite Truck
GAME OF 2007:
Metroid Prime 3: Corruption
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: To finally fix the leaky bit in my roof

Team *GM* celebrated the new year this month by going out for a slap-up feed. Jes had some lovely roast pork. And the vegetables? "Oh, they all had the same as me."

KATH
CHIMP GIRL

PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Trauma Center
GAME OF 2007:
Alan Wake
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:
Give up Reality TV. Apart from *Big Brother*. And *I'm A Celebrity*. And the rest. Aaargh!

Notorious animal-lover Kath hopes to have liberated the entire animal kingdom from human rule by the end of 2007. "I foresee a beast-government comprising a Blue Whale, several Okapi and at least one Bonobo."

ALEX D
PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Excite Truck
GAME OF 2007:
BioShock
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: To be less attractive to women

DAVE
PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Tomb Raider Anniversary
GAME OF 2007: *Resident Evil 5*
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:
To not get my hopes up about superhero games

MUTIE BEAUTY

"Ah! The new year. By 2008 I hope to have lived my dream of becoming an X-Man. My mutant power? Well, I make a mean cup of tea and my raspeberry fool is to die for. It's a start, isn't it?"

GERAINT
LOVE WHALE

PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Trauma Center: Second Opinion
GAME OF 2007:
Mass Effect
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:
Not to spend a single minute playing *World of Warcraft* for 12 months – and beyond!

The new year always fills Geraint full of hope and joy for the future. Skipping into the office, swinging a bunch of leeks, we asked him in particular what 2007 holds for him. "Well now", he whistled like an ambulatory whale, "I hope to buy a new pair of trousers, mend the hole in my bucket, and possibly kiss a girl. Note I said 'possibly' there."

BIG TOP BULLY

Alex 'Icewind' Dale has a terrible fear of circuses, and 2007 will be the year he finally manages to wipe them all out with extreme prejudice. "How will I do it? Easy. I'll just go for the juggler."

STEVE
SO TIRED

PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Trauma Center: Second Opinion
GAME OF 2007:
Yakuza 2
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:
To turn my biceps into something wonderful, and re-establish normal sleeping patterns

Respected gaming robot Steve is an ambassador for human-cyborg relations. He hopes that the new year will see greater man/machine harmony, and plans to kick things off by marrying his toaster. "She's lovely", he said, modestly.

ADAM
RABBITING ON

Noted eccentric Adam swapped his trademark hat for a rabbit this month. Why on Earth did you do that, Adam? "Well, it's because I'm losing my hare." Ouch.

PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Yoshi's Island DS
GAME OF 2007:
Super Mario Galaxy
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:
To become Captain Jack Harkness and head up Torchwood Norfolk

JOEL
PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Resistance: Fall of Man
GAME OF 2007:
Heavenly Sword
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: Finish *Guitar Hero 2* on Expert, then learn to play the real guitar

KARATE KID

Martial arts expert Joel used his powers for good this month by tracking down a short psychic who had escaped from jail. "I just couldn't stand by while a small medium was at large", he said.

ROB
PAVE GAME THIS ISH?
Halo 3, baby!
GAME OF 2007:
Crysis. No, wait, *BioShock*. Or *Mass Effect*...
YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:
1080p for my living room. I'm going to live 2007 in high definition!

MAHOGANY MAN

Illegitimate son of David Hasselhoff and winner of Bath's Orangest Man competition from 1979-2006 inclusively, Rob is hoping 2007 will bring him more opportunities to show off his pecs. Bless.

GamesMaster 2007

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The biggest game news – first!

>> EPISODE 2 AWOL

Bad news Freeman fans – Valve's Doug Lombardi has confirmed the eagerly awaited *Half-Life 2: Episode 2* has slipped to summer 2007 on both PC and Xbox 360. Drat. Obviously, this also means we're not going to get any *Team Fortress 2* and *Portal* lovin' until that time either, but since Valve are almost as famous for delays as they are for their FPS extravaganzas we can hardly claim to be overly surprised...

LAUNCH Wii

YOU COULDN'T MAKE IT UP...

Console launches aren't all orderly queuing and pleasant chit-chat. Here are some of the crazier stories *GM* has encountered this month...

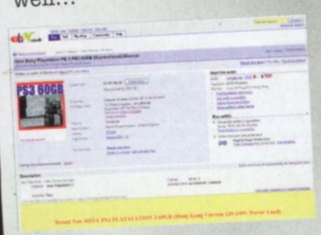
SWAP KIDS FOR PS3!

It's amazing the lengths some US gamers were prepared to stretch to snag their PS3s. Radio station KDWB-FM asked listeners if they were willing to *give up their kids* for 24 hours in exchange for the console, with more than a dozen callers up for the swap – which turned out to be a hoax. Personally, it sounded like a top idea to us...

We've queued all night in the freezing cold and all we got was this cheap Wii beanie!

EBAY!

On eBay US sellers have sold 14,675 PS3s for an average price of $1,186 throughout November. Obviously not all the punters who queued to bag their PS3s early did so out of their love of gaming. Interestingly, more PS3s were sold than actual games in Japan – sounds like the Ebay bug might be catching on over there as well...



It's clear Wii is one of the 'gotta-have' products for the holiday season.

So said Nintendo of America President Reggie Fils-Aime!

DEAD WiiS!

They braved the crowds, and were gearing up for a weekend of fun, right? Wrong. Some users attempting to download their first update from WiiConnect 24 found that it broke their Wiis, resulting in error messages and one dead console. The good news? Nintendo pledged to replace the units for free. The bad news? It'll take up to two weeks.

XBOX 360 DOA

What a controversial piece of work *DOA4* was, with that challenging difficulty alienating fans of the series left, right and centre. Now, Team Ninja's Tomonobu Itagaki has revealed that the fifth installment in the best beat 'em up that *isn't Virtua Fighter, Soul Calibur* or *Tekken* is currently in development for 360, but surprisingly minus the famous tag team battles the series is renowned for...

MARVEL-OUS

Not one but three exciting pieces of superhero related action for you lucky lot – *Iron Man* (Sega). *Fantastic 4 2: Rise of the Silver Surfer* (Take 2) and *Ghost Rider* (2K Games) are currently in the works, all based upon their respective blockbuster flicks. Iron Man will star Robert Downey Jr, *Ghost Rider* features Nicholas Cage and *Fantastic Four* is all about lovely Jessica Alba. Hmm... we know which one we're looking forward to the most. *Iron Man, of course!*

FRENZY! PS3 VS. PS3

The next-gen race begins...

As you read this, both PS3 and Wii will have launched in the States and Japan and the much-hyped console war to end all console wars will finally have commenced.

Despite bullish pre-release claims by the Sony camp that PS3 supply would be able to meet demand, just 80,000 units eventually arrived in Japan in time for the November 11th launch, with a mere 175,000 hitting Stateside six days later. While many gamers were left disappointed, the console still sold out almost instantaneously.

It was a different story for Wii, with 400,000 units allocated for Japan and 600,000 for the US – all of which were snapped up by a public whose imaginations appear to have been captured by Nintendo's savvy marketing blitz. Statistically, Wii's launch was more successful than both PS3 and Xbox 360's combined, though admittedly it wasn't hampered by severe stock shortages.

Gaming fans in both countries braved the cold to secure their units, but those who hadn't pre-ordered risked being turned away – with some stores in Japan even organizing lotteries to decide who would bag a PS3.

All very honorable, apart from certain individuals who reportedly paid off tramps to queue in their absence... tsk, eh?

Back in the US of A, courageous punters faced more than lengthy lines – they also had to brave armed robbers, drive-by shooting, queue-jumping ex-senators and maniacs with sledgehammers trashing their new consoles in full public view. Only in America.

Meanwhile, eBay was alight as almost 15,000 opportunistic (and counting) punters grabbed at the chance to flog their PS3s on for astronomical sums to 'true' fans, with the most expensive auction recorded at a maniacal $9,000!

Obviously feeling left out, Microsoft tried to crash the party by suggesting *they* had triumphed during the US launch weekend, with (Bill Gates owned) website MSN reporting Xbox 360 was "the hottest selling gaming console during the period".

So the machines are out, all three combatants have laid their cards on the table and the fight for the hearts and minds of gamers rages as fiercely as ever – but who will be the eventual winners of the console war? Stick with *GM* for the latest news.

ACHES & PAINS!

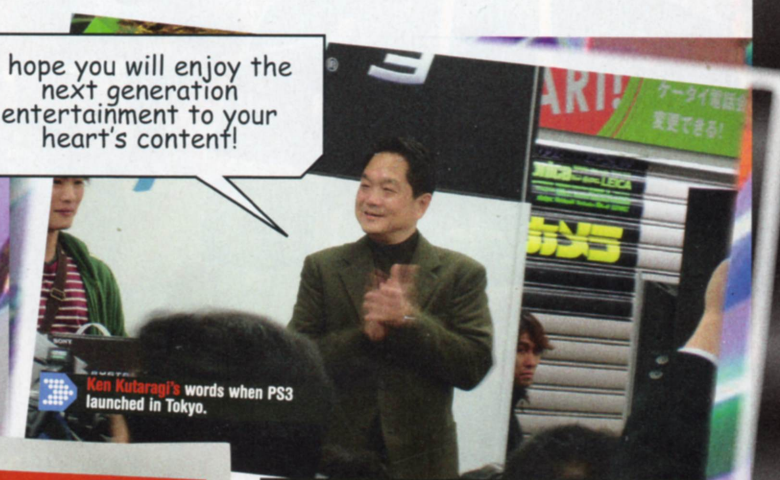
It seems as if unfit gamers have already met their matches at the hands of the Wii controller, with many reporting aches, muscle cramps and sprains as a result of lengthy playing sessions. Nintendo's Perrin Kaplan was unsympathetic: If people are finding themselves sore, they may need to exercise more." Get her!

WHOOPS...

One over-zealous Ninty fan has already seen his Wii dreams – and his telly – go up in smoke when sweaty palms and a snapped wrist strap resulted in a controller hurtling through the screen of his 60" projection TV. Question is: will Nintendo be liable?

RIOTING!

With Sony's PS3 stocks failing to meet demand in the States, police had to be called in to restrain pissed-off punters as queues turned nasty. In Connecticut, two armed teens shot someone in a bungled attempt to nick a PS3 while in Wisconsin a stampede resulted in the hospitalisation of a 19 year-old fan. Ouch...



Ken Kutaragi's words when PS3 launched in Tokyo.

SMASHING!

When iPod and Xbox 360 launched two mentalists smashed them up in front of horrified onlookers. Guess what? They were at it again with PS3, raising funding through online donations before taking a sledgehammer to one unlucky console. If any Xbox 360 or Wii fanboys fancy tittering at PS3 desecration, surf on over to: www.smashmyps3.com...

THE LOWDOWN

- Japanese retail price – from 49,980 yen ($430)...
- US retail price – from $499 to $599...
- Japanese launch allocation – 80,000 units. Sold Out
- US launch allocation – 175,000 units. Sold Out
- Money Sony loses with each sale of PS3: $307.
- Money Nintendo gains with each sale of Wii: $53.
- Top selling PS3 titles Japan: *Ridge Racer 7, Mobile Suit Gundam: Crossfire* and *Resistance.*
- Top selling PS3 titles US: *Ridge Racer 7, Resistance: Fall of Man* and *Call of Duty 3.*
- US – price: $249.99
- US launch allocation – 600,000. Sold Out.
- Japanese launch allocation – 400,000 units. Sold Out
- Top selling titles US: *Zelda, Red Steel* and *Super Monkey Ball.*
- Percentage who bought *Zelda* with their Wii: 75%

SO WHO WON?

In terms of units sold, Nintendo are the clear winners of the launch war – delivering *exactly* the amount of consoles they promised they would and selling out within 24 hours to rave reviews in the local press. Ninty might have won the battle, then, but don't bank on them winning the war – this one is destined to go all the way...

100% NEW!

FATAL 360

It looked as if *Fatal Inertia*, the superb-looking riff on *Wipeout* by Koei, was roaring down the PS3 only route, but words reaches us that Microsoft seems to have grabbed a sneaky piece of the action with an Xbox 360 conversion purportedly in the works.

RAINBOW ROAD

Okay, so we might not have been exactly keen on Rising Star's *Rainbow Islands Revolution* on DS, but we've reasonable hopes that *Rainbow Islands: Evolution* – out early 2007 on PSP – *won't* suck. A pseudo-3D interpretation of the classic platformer, Bob and Bub are out to foil the dastardly plans of an ecosystem-polluting record company.

DEVILISH!

Nero's not exactly armless – Dante watch out! *Devil May Cry 4* is shaping up to be something quite demonic on PS3.

Guns! He's not toting Ebony *or* Ivory; instead, Nero comes packing a single, deadly, revolver. Nice.

Son? They obviously share the same tailor, but do Dante and Nero also share the same genes? Bet on it.

Gothic! Expect Nero to wreak havoc across a mix of medieval areas, smashing lots of stained glass along the way…

Devil Arm! Watch out Dante, Nero might have pinched your haircut but that arm of his is one-of-a-kind – and deadly…

BIG SHOTS

The coolest shots from the hottest new games!

The time is nigh once again readers, so get your orbs round these scorching shots and commence slobbering at the games set to blow your minds in 2007…

A regular tree, yes? Nope, it's an Ent!

It's *Lord of the Rings, The Battle for Middle-earth 2: The Rise of the Witch-king* on PC! Hey, now there's no room for a caption…

Could rock solid shoot 'em up *Metal Slug* be *the* single most frustrating use of the Wii-mote ever?

VROOM!

Colin may have left his life of rallying behind, but the McRae legacy lives on. Check out all that *Dirt* on PS3…

Check the groovy Knights Templar cross carved into his undead flesh!

The walls – and the reaper – of *Jericho* are closing in. Trust Clive Barker to scare us. (PC)

SNIPER SHOT

Powerslides cause smoke to billow and leaves to scatter. Mmm, autumn…

Budding Mavericks and Ice-men rejoice as Sega's arcade classic heads for PSP. *Afterburner's* a-blazing…

BAJA BIT

With the Wii rapidly establishing itself as the home of 4x4 racers, it should come as no surprise to anyone to discover that two new ones – *Baja Mania* and *Baja Destruction* – are hurtling towards an early 2007 release. Developed by Broadsword Interactive (the *Dakar Racing* fellas), *Baja Mania* is a semi-realistic take on dune buggy racing while *Baja Destruction* is a more mental, *Mario Kart* battle mode-style affair.

360 BUT

Noticed the deluge of ads for Xbox 360 that have been swamping your TVs for the past month? It's all been leading up to this – an official Microsoft price cut of the Core system by a tenner to £199. (though to be fair it's been selling at this price point for a while now online) Still, that sub-£200 tag will no doubt lure many parents over to 360 over the hols, even if we'd still opt for the premium pack at £279.99...

XBOX 360 £199

SNIPER SHOT

Check the old school red telephone box!

BRAAAINS!

The Hellgates have opened, and London is besieged. Give those zombies what for in – yes – *Hellgate: London!* (PC)

Those wyverns are back! Reckon you're a badass *Monster Hunter?* Now's your chance to prove it... (PSP)

NFL Street 3 hits PS2 and PSP harder than a William 'The Refrigerator' Perry tackle. Ouch, that's gotta smart.

What's up with Tenno's messed up arm?

Bio-engineered super-soldier Hayden Tenno negotiates a dilapidated Soviet Bloc in *Dark Sector*. Those Ruskies are a pain in the neck... (PS3)

MotorStorm is the future of racing games – after you've wallowed in this eye-massaging PS3 mudbath the likes of *Gran Turismo* just seem so *boooring*...

Physics! From the spot-on suspension to the explosions to way you'll never land the same jump twice, *MotorStorm* simply screams next-gen.

Damage! Prang your vehicle and it'll crunch like aluminium foil. Spoilers fall off, bits of the engine haemorrhage – it's like *Scrap Heap Challenge!*

Wall of Death! Hit these to build up some serious speed and catapult yourself past competitors...

Bikes! These nifty little machines handle like a dream, but beware of being hunted down and rammed by psychopathic Big Rigs...

Mud! The *real* object of the game is to get both your ride and your jodhpurs as messy as possible. Possibly.

CAR-MAGEDDON!

100% NEW!

LOCO CHRIMBO

After the success of their Halloween-themed level download, those kind chappies at Sony have decided to repeat the act by releasing a new snow-sprinkled Christmassy level for *LocoRoco* at www.locoroco.com. From December 11, get ready to battle new enemies, encounter Yuletide regulars like sleights and reindeers and hum along to a ker-azy new festive tune.

TURTLE POWER

You might have thought Leonardo, Donatello and the crew might have gone the way of Turtle soup after their near-world domination in the nineties, but you'd be wrong. In fact, those tough terrapins are set to make a movie comeback in 2007 – and EA has shelled (arf!) for the license – as well as confirming it'll be a launch title for PS3! March 23 is the date, and we bet you can't wait.

NEW STUFF

XPLODER HD HDTV PLAYER

Bagged an HDTV this Crimbo from Santa? Lucky you! Pity PS2 games look so rubbish on it! Xploder have the solution. Simply pop their disk in your PS2, plug in the bundled component cable, select your HD resolutions from 480p through to 1080i and prepare for melted eyeballs. Although expect to see some jaggies as some games work better than others.

FROM: Xploder
CONTACT: www.xploder.net
PRICE: £29.99

WORLD OF WARCRAFT TRADING CARDS

Calling *World of Warcraft* fanboys! Can't get enough of the MMORPG that's taken the internet by storm? Then prepare to bin your *Yu-Gi-Oh!* and *Magic: The Gathering* cards and start shuffling with this classy new deck. Kick things off with this Heroes of Azeroth starter pack...

FROM: Upper Deck
CONTACT: www.ude.com/wow
PRICE: £9.99

KOSS QZ77 EARPHONES

Bored of Grandpa's old war stories? Then beg Mum for these noise reducing earphones from Koss. Both passive and active noise reduction totally remove any interfering sounds, so prepare to hear *absolutely nothing* but the cool tunes emanating from your PSPs and DSs (or even MP3 players, we imagine). Heavenly!

FROM: Koss
CONTACT: www.koss.com
PRICE: £74.99

ECLIPSE II BACKLIT KEYBOARD

Featuring *three* user-selectable backlit colours (blue, red and purple) Saitek's sexy new effort is packed with all the shortcut keys you could ever wish for and feels fantastic whether you're working on an essay or improving your frag count in *Counterstrike*.

FROM: Saitek
CONTACT: www.saitek.com/uk
PRICE: £39.99

PHOENIX DOWN!

Harry Potter coming to next gen...

The books and the flicks just keep on getting better, but after 2005's disappointing *Goblet of Fire* we're still twiddling our wands waiting for the definite *Harry Potter* videogame. Will the recently announced *Order of the Phoenix* finally fulfill the Potter prophecy?

With EA retaining the license, *Phoenix* will be the first of our heroic wizard's adventures to hit next gen – with 360, PS3 and Wii all coming in for some Rowling lovin' – in addition to PS2, PSP, DS, GBA and (phew!) PC in July 2007.

GM has discovered that Harry, Dumbledore and Sirius Black will all be playable characters, but otherwise EA are keeping schtum on gameplay details. Could these tasty titbits from *Order of the Phoenix* make it into the final game, though?

Trying to pass Harry's Occlumency lessons with scary Professor Snape!

Giving bitchy Daily Prophet journo Rita Skeeter a good shoeing. The cow!

Experimenting with new tricks in Fred and George Weasley's joke shop!

The deadly showdown between Sirius and his Death Eater cousin Bellatrix Lestrange!

Hazza, Ron and Hermione's race to the Ministry of Magic on the back of Thestrals!

Beating the bejezus out of the Death Eaters with badass Dumbledore...

BREAKING NEWS GRAN TURISMO HD NOW A FREE DOWNLOAD ON PS3!

SIM-POSSIBLE

The Sims gets Nintendo makeover...

Looks like *Animal Crossing* Wii doesn't it? In fact, these amazing new shots of *The Sims* for Wii reveal a totally new artistic direction for the much-loved soap opera game.

Swapping semi-realistic graphics for a *Harvest Moon*-style look is a bold move, but could it signal that Wii will be marketed primarily as a kiddies' machine or is EA simply changing tack in order to crack the hostile Japanese market?

One thing we *are* sure of though is that the previously mouse-driven gameplay (no matter what console fanboys say *Sims* always played better on PC!) should fit the Wii controller like the proverbial glove.

Hitting Japan sometime in 2007, we're hoping for a Western release before the end of next year.

Look at that ickle town square – but what are that dirty pair up to?

Sims Wii retains the classic gameplay, albeit wth a more cutesy look and feel.

"Sloppy Giuseppe, please". "Hey, that's a no way to talk about my brother!"

Give piñatas a better place to go! Custom build your very own piñata world and juggle the relationships of over 60 species of piñatas including the SOURS, who might need a good whacking if you catch them causing trouble. An unruly world is no world for piñatas. Wouldn't you agree? vivapinata.com

Viva Piñata! Don't beat 'em, join 'em!

Viva Piñata

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Jump in.

XBOX 360™

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE AT THE EPICENTRE OF A CONSOLE LAUNCH?

GM gets in line for the November 19th launch of Wii – in New York!

We've always printed photos of queues for big console releases – but what's it really like to be part of a launch? We sent Geraint off to New York to see just how hard it is to get a console on launch day...

Courtesy of New York Apple Association
© New York Apple Association

1 Here it is. The Big Apple. The launch took place round about here (ish). If we failed, we'd have thrown ourselves down to the streets below.

2 The launch took place in Times Square at midnight. The most hectic place on earth!

The four storey Wii Sign on the side of Toys R Us was a bit hard to miss.

3 This is the front of the queue. Some of these people were waiting on New York's sewage-flavoured streets for over 24 hours...

4 ...Under blankets. Like vagrants. Some of these people looked like they were zombies.

5 The line stretched back around three sides of the building – even at 10 in the morning!

6 If you wanted to get a Wii, you needed one of these special bracelets. Which we didn't have.

7 Without a bracelet, we decided to head back later, under cover of darkness.

8 In a closed-off street there were a bunch of blokes hopping up and down on, um, pogo legs. This is what passes for 'entertainment' in the US of A.

9 This guy was first in line. His 'name' is 'Triforce'. We tried to speak to him, but there was another queue to do so!

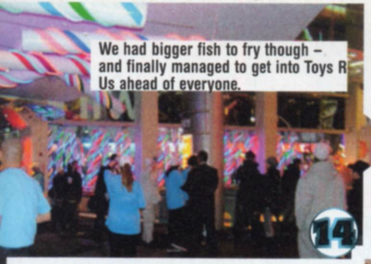
Some people queued for over 30 hours!

10 Only one hour to go at this point – it was all about acting fast...

11 It's just a few hours from launch time here – and the queue had turned into a circus. There were camera crews everywhere – and a real party atmosphere had kicked in. It felt like New Year's Eve. Sort of.

12 The best option was some good old fashioned pushing in. Geraint confused his new 'friends' with tales of the motherland and... he's in! Almost the first Welshman in the world to get a Wii!

13 Get in! Nintendo gave us a golden ticket – an Access All Areas pass. We left the queue in search of glory!

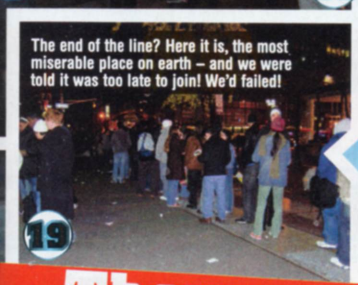


We had bigger fish to fry though – and finally managed to get into Toys R Us ahead of everyone.

Security was reeeeaal tight inside the store.

The floodgates opened, and punters came pouring down to get their first Wiis.

Reggie himself was there to sign and package the first Wii to Mr Triforce. If that's his real name.

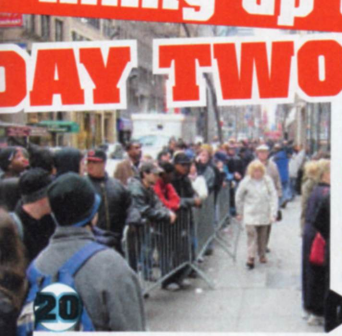


The end of the line? Here it is, the most miserable place on earth – and we were told it was too late to join! We'd failed!

We picked up a Wii and took it to the counter. "No bracelet, no system" she says, scowling at us. "You wanna get yourself to the end of the line, pal!"

Thousands of people were lining up the day after too!

DAY TWO



Or had we? I heard from someone in the queue that the Nintendo World store would be selling Wiis at six in the morning on Sunday. He also said the queue was 'pretty small'. Which, I saw, was a bit of a lie when I got there the following morning.

About 2000 people later, this was the entrance. Along with a security man that didn't seem to like me very much.

This was me at six in the morning. Not too impressed. I decided to go back to Toys R Us, which I was told was re-opening at noon.

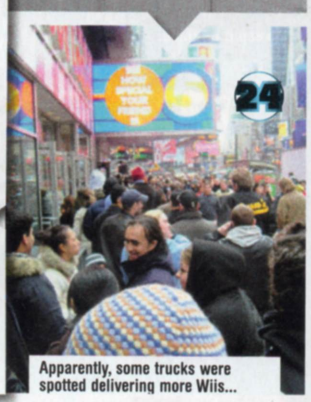
The result – a shopping basket with $1000 worth of Wii action. That, friends, was sweet success!

The Wii Pit! Wiis piled high as far as the eye could see! And bins stuffed full of *Zeldas!* We were in heaven!

I'm in! Riding the escalator had never felt so good.

The magic bracelet man comes past. Result! If I stayed where I was, I was guaranteed to get a Wii! Hurrah!

By this time I'd been in the queue for about almost six hours and I really needed a wee – no, not a Wii. A WEE! Do you see, Nintendo?



Apparently, some trucks were spotted delivering more Wiis...

TURN OVER THE PAGE! To see us cracking it open!

LAUNCH LINE UP!

Here are some of the friends we made while queueing up to get our Wii. They suffered long, but were all jolly nice...

HECTOR AND HECTOR 2.0

How long have you been waiting?
Just an hour.
What games are you getting?
Zelda.
What are you most looking forward to next year?
Smash Bros.
Why are you getting a Wii?
Because it's cheap. And better. And it has Nintendo's games on it.
Who's going to win the console war?
Maybe the 360. It's got a big head start.

RED

How long have you been waiting?
Only a couple of hours.
What games are you getting?
Zelda and *Rayman*. It's good to get at least one party game.
What are you most looking forward to next year?
Definitely *Metroid*. And *Mario Galaxy*.
Why are you getting a Wii?
I love *Mario*. And I queued up for a PS3 but

EVERETT

How long have you been waiting?
27 hours.
What games are you getting?
I'm not sure if I'm getting one yet – I'm just here to support my friends.
Are you mental?
Maybe! Never been to a console launch before – thought I'd check it out. Might pick one up when I get inside I guess.
You should, after waiting so long!

JOHN

Nice joypads!
Thanks. I thought I'd make an effort for the queue.
How long have you been waiting?
About 12 hours I think. I got here at eight this morning.
What games are you getting?
Zelda. I might get *Monkey Ball* too.
What are you most looking forward to next year?
Smash Bros Brawl.

JOHANNA, GEO & GORDON

How long have you been waiting?
About 3 hours now. It's freezing.
What games are you getting?
Zelda and *Red Steel.*
What are you most looking forward to next year?
Metroid.
Why are you getting a Wii?
The new controller. You're not just sitting down any more – you've gotta get your body into it. The Virtual Console too.

100% new!

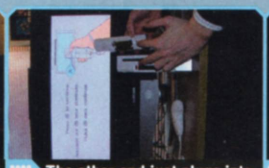
Wii: LIVE UNPACK

SETTING UP

Getting your Wii up and running is as simple as you could hope for!

THE REMOTE

This is powered by two AA batteries – which come included in the Wii box, as well as the spare remote packaging.



The other end just plugs into the back of your Wii. The lead is quite long, too, if you want your console away from your TV.

You can attach a nunchuk to the bottom of your controller. You can also loop the wrist strap into the nunchuk controller.

We strongly suggest you use the wrist strap. You won't find it particularly funny if you launch your remote through your telly.

One thing we're not too impressed by is this: you have to attach the classic controller to the remote in order for it to work.

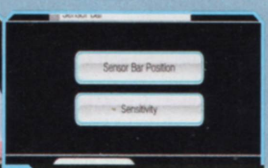
If you get too close, the Wii doesn't like it much, so you need plenty of room to play *Sports* then. But it works up to 400 feet away!

THE SENSOR BAR

Very easy to set up and there's no calibration – *at all!*

You can place it above or below your TV. Use the sticky pads underneath to keep it in place.

The other end just plugs into the back of your Wii. The lead is quite long, too, if you want your console away from your TV.



The next step is to tell your Wii whether your sensor bar is above and below your TV. It couldn't be easier!

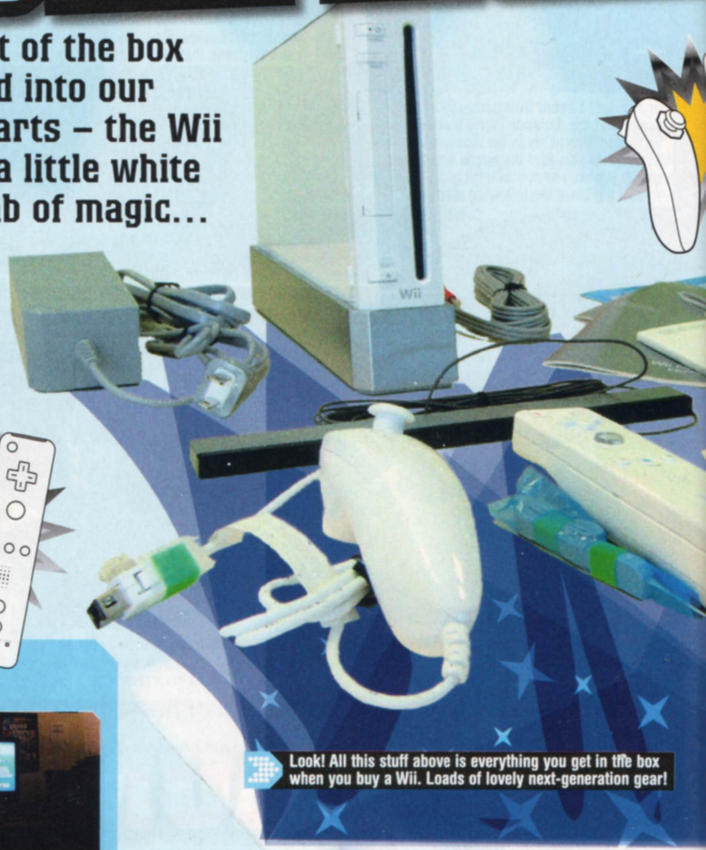
THE PHOTO CHANNEL

The photo channel is available the minute you power up your Wii.

You can either view photos from an SD card, or photos sent with a message.

The Wii will automatically detect any photos and vide you have available.

Out of the box and into our hearts – the Wii is a little white slab of magic...



Look! All this stuff above is everything you get in the box when you buy a Wii. Loads of lovely next-generation gear!

TRY THIS!

Did you know you can throw your ball into other peoples' lanes in Wii bowling? You can even throw the ball backwards...

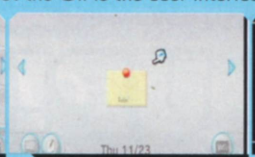
TRY THIS!

If you hold down button 1 on your remote while on the puzzle page, you can unlock a 192 piece puzzle. You can even play it co-operatively!

UP FRONT

One of the best things about the Wii is the user interface...

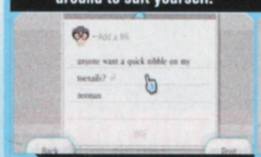
Boot up is super-quick – no flashy intro, nothing, just straight to the main page. You can move these boxes around to suit yourself.



Every time you pass your remote over something selectable, your remote lets off a little rumble. It's a lovely touch.

Every action gives some feedback like cute bleeps and chimes – Nintendo quality through and through.

Navigation couldn't be easier, with buttons clearly marked. Even entering words via the keyboard is quick and easy!



This is especially handy when it comes to quickly typing stupid messages and sending them to your mates!

You can access information, like when and how long you played certain games – all stored in the Wii's handy calendar.

The three main Channels available from the start are Shopping, Weather and News. Only Shopping is active right now.

Thanks to the always-on 'Connect 24', updates like the forthcoming browser or new shop content can be added while you sleep!

TRY THIS!

After a *Wii Sports* tennis game has finished. press and hold the 2 button after you've selected 'Play Again' – you'll get to play on a blue court instead!

TRY THIS!

Go to the 'Fun' page of the Photo Channel, and you'll spot a little cat running across the top of the screen. Grab it using the A and B button and it'll give you tips!

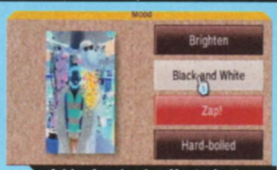
TRY THIS!

Don't have an SD card? You can email photos to your Wii instead! The slot even flashes and your Wii remote rings to let you know you have a message.

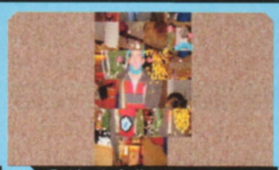
You select photos with the Wii remote from the gallery screen...

... And you have all the usual rotate and zoom commands, and one called 'fun'.

This lets you scribble over your photos for your own sick amusement...



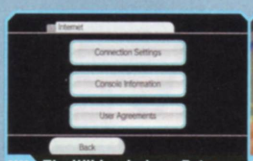
Add a few basic effects (not so great, that bit) and send them to your mates.



But best of all, you can turn photos and videos into puzzles for you to play!

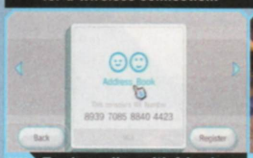
GETTING ONLINE

If you've managed to get your DS talking to the interwebs, then this couldn't be easier.



The Wii is wireless. Enter the Internet menu, and go to Connection Settings – your Wii will automatically look for a wireless connection.

You can either use the wireless router in your house, or even Nintendo's USB Wi-Fi dongle that they released for the DS.



To play online with friends, it works like the DS – you'll need to give your friend code to a mate, and then get theirs off them.

The first game to use the Wii's online capabilities will be *Pokemon Battle Revolution*, out next year. It could be great!

TRY THIS!

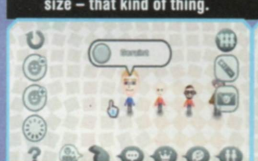
If you twist your hands around, the hand cursor rotates on screen to match what you're doing! Brilliant!

ALL ABOUT Mii

Before you start playing any games, particularly *Wii Sports*, we suggest you set up your Mii...

There are options for hair, eyes, colour, noses, body size – that kind of thing.

Once you've made your Mii, they wander around in the Plaza. You can pick 'em up!



It's easy to make a good version of yourself. Here's Geraint's pitiful effort!

Although pretty limited, you can get some unique Miis if you fiddle for long enough.

You can set them to 'Mingle' – so they'll wander to your mate's Wii when online!

If you send your Mii to your remote, you can take it round to a friend's house, along with your settings!

TRY THIS!

You can put MP3s onto an SD card and change the background music for your photo slide shows!

Wii RECKON...

What Team *GM* think of Wii!

Much after-work *Wii Sports* fun has led Geraint to the inescapable conclusion that bowling is best.

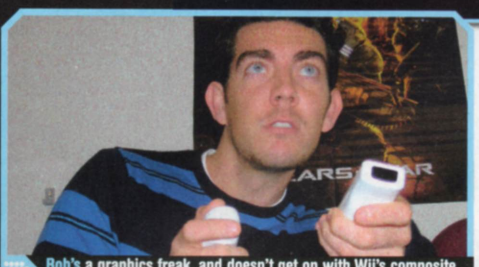
There's definitely some magic here. *Wii Sports* is incredibly good fun, simple but brilliant – and *Zelda* is just as you'd hope it would be, sprawling and reeking of Nintendo quality. Just wielding the remote is such good fun, it almost makes you forget about the last-gen graphics.
Geraint

The first lady of gaming, Kath loves the golf. But she's really looking forward to making a fool of herself in *WarioWare*.

Wii Sports, *Zelda*, *ExciteTruck* – all have proven the Wii is versatile. And casual gamers will take to it quickly – if not quicker - than us hardened gamers. All encouraging stuff, but it seems worrying that only first-party games are going to be must-haves and the less shiny graphics will shorten the Wii's lifespan.
Kath

Robin had so much fun with *Wii Sports'* tennis this month that he accidentally whacked the remote into the wall. Careful, now.

I haven't seen anyone pick up a Wii remote and not have fun. Team *GM* has never laughed as much as when we're playing *Wii sports*. Even grumpy old me. But I think you'll want an Xbox 360 or PS3 as well to play your favourite non-Nintendo games.
Robin



Rob's a graphics freak, and doesn't get on with Wii's composite lead. And look! You can see you can see right up his nose!

It's barely topped the Cube in terms of visuals, but it was never going to be about power. It's all about the controller, and while I have my reservations (*Call of Duy 3* plays *worse* on Wii) the loveliness of *WarioWare* and *Wii Sports* has almost won me over.
Rob

This month, Jes has mostly been playing *Excite Truck*. "Makes me feel like Burt Reynolds" he said, mysteriously.

I'm not fussed at all about HD graphics, and swinging that remote is more fun than a bag full of monkeys. And *Zelda!* Best. Game. *Ever.* I think, however, that we're only going to see the machine come into its own a year or so after launch, though – just like DS...
Jes

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100% new!

2G FUN

Nvidia have beaten bitter rivals ATI to the punch by announcing their first DirectX 10 graphics card. The GeForce 8800 GTX and nForce 680i SLI companion motherboard should make *Crysis* run like a dream...

NO ROSE

Rule of Rose has come in for a bashing. So much so that publisher 505 Games has announced that it "has taken the decision not to publish *Rule of Rose* in the UK at this time". We reviewed the game on page 74, and we didn't find it too horrible...

GM AWARDS 2006

Have your say on the games that really mattered in 2006...

Crikey, what a 12 months... we've jumped for joy as Wii (and *Zelda!*) hit the UK, wept as PS3 slipped to 2007, gawped as 360 upped the ante with *Gears of War* and watched as PSP and DS duked it out.

The *GM* Reader Awards are your chance to tell everyone your personal highs and lows of 2006, as well as get your grubby mitts on a sexy PSP! Remember, though – it's only games released in 2006 that qualify, so voting for *Speedball 2* as your GOTY is forbidden!

And now, the important bit!

GAME OF THE YEAR 2006

BEST PS2 GAME OF 2006

BEST XBOX 360 GAME OF 2006

BEST CUBE GAME OF 2006

BEST PC GAME OF 2006

BEST DS GAME OF 2006

BEST PSP GAME OF 2006

BEST Wii GAME OF 2006

BEST PIECE OF HARDWARE 2006

BEST GRAPHICS OF 2006

BEST CHEAT/SECRET OF 2006

BEST GAME SOUNDTRACK OF 2006

BEST MULTI-PLAYER PUT-DOWN

HERO OF THE YEAR 2006

VILLAIN OF THE YEAR 2006

BIGGEST "WOW" MOMENT OF 2006

DISAPPOINTMENT OF THE YEAR

SOLID SNAKE AWARD FOR BAD HAIR

MULTI-PLAYER GAME OF 2006

SEXIEST GAME BABE/BLOKE OF 2006

MOST ANTICIPATED TITLE OF 2007

YOUR DETAILS

NAME .....

AGE .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

PHONE NUMBER ..... EMAIL .....

Email us!

Want to vote by email? Simply send your awards choices to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk, with GM Awards 2006 as the subject line.

WIN!

Vote now – all entries will be entered into our compo to win a PSP!

HOW TO VOTE:

1. Head your choices 'GM Awards 2006' and email to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk
2. Jot down your choices (or photocopy/rewrite it on a piece of paper) and bung it in the post to GM Awards 2006, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

Closing date is 31/01/07. One lucky entry will plucked at random to win a PSP! Good luck!

100% new!

C&C conquered

Battle for Middle Earth 2 proved that Xbox 360 *can* do RTSs, and pretty darn well. Now, EA has confirmed *Command & Conquer 3: Tiberium Wars* is due for some 360 portage treatment, with Ensemble bods stressing that the frantic, clicky-clicky gameplay is "ultra-responsive, smooth-as-silk". Expect it late 2007.

PC gears up

Some *Gears of War* PC art has leaked onto the 'net. Well, it was always going to happen, especially as Microsoft pushes the Vista hype machine into overdrive. No idea about a release date though – we reckon PC owners will be lucky to see it before 2008 if the PC *Halo* debacles are anything to go by. In the meantime, Microsoft VP Jeff Bell has let slip about plans for a possible *Gears* trilogy. Fingers and toes crossed, eh?

UK Top 20 Games Chart

January wouldn't be January without *NFS* sitting atop of the charts. Wrestlers, soldiers and footballing types weep as one.

GM uses the ChartTrack chart – the only chart officially recognised by the UK software industry. Get the full 20 in *GM* every month!

ChartTrack

IT'S THE ONLY CHART THAT COUNTS!

NO.		Last week	2 weeks ago	3 weeks ago	GAME	PUBLISHER	GM'S SCORE	GM JUDGEMENTS
1	▼	1	-	-	Need for Speed: Carbon PS2 XBOX PSP 360	EA	79%	Lots of gloss, video and events can't hide the problems under the bonnet.
2	NEW	-	-	-	WWE SmackDown! Vs. RAW 2007 PS2 360	THQ	85%	If you love wrestling it'll make you squeal – if you don't, you'll think it's broken.
3	NEW	-	-	-	Call of Duty 3 XBOX 360	Activision	87%	A breathtaking experience but lacking the spark and guile to turn it into a classic.
4	▼	2	1	-	Pro Evolution Soccer 6 PS2 PC 360 GOLD AWARD	Konami	91%	A low-key farewell to the PS2 rather than the explosive extravaganza we hoped for.
5	▼	3	2	2	FIFA 07 PS2 XBOX PC PSP GOLD AWARD	EA	90%	The surprise of the season. *PES* should be worried – this lights up the pitch like it's on fire…
6	▼	4	3	3	The Sims 2: Pets PS2 CUBE PC 360 DS	EA	52%	*Pets* is a *Sims* game too far; it offers very little that's new in terms of gameplay.
7	▼	6	-	-	GTA: Vice City Stories PSP	Take 2	85%	A superb technical achievement, but it's *GTA's* quirks and cranks that linger longer.
8	▲	11	9	6	Lego Star Wars 2: The Original Trilogy PS2 PC 360 DS GOLD AWARD	LucasArts	90%	They've fixed the broken bits and made everything else better. The perfect sequel!
9	NEW	-	-	-	Medieval 2: Total War PC GOLD AWARD	Sega	94%	A kingly mixture of action and strategy – not only a top RTS but also the PC game of the year.
10	▼	5	5	-	Canis Canem Edit PS2 GOLD AWARD	Take 2	90%	*GTA* in a school is the easiest way to sum this up – but this is unique and brilliant fun.
11	▼	8	6	5	Splinter Cell: Double Agent. PS2 XBOX PC 360	Ubisoft	86%	A daring departure for *Splinter Cell* – and it *almost* works. But what will Sam Fisher do next?
12	▲	13	10	8	Cars PS2 GBA DS PSP	THQ	76%	A movie spin-off that deserves the inevitable success it will achieve. Surprisingly good.
13	▼	12	8	9	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 07 PS2 PC PSP 360	EA	77%	EA keep it tight and predictable to see out this generation. Good, but familiar.
14	NEW	-	-	-	Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Blue Rescue DS	Nintendo	70%	A nice twist on the *Pokémon* formula, but this isn't the stuff of greatness.
15	▼	10	7	4	Scarface: The World is Yours PS2 XBOX PC	Vivendi	86%	A brutal, bullish and ballsy game that manages to match the film's punch.
16	▼	7	4	1	Football Manager 2007 PC GOLD AWARD	Sega	91%	Feature-rich and endlessly absorbing – but where is there to go from here?
17	▼	15	12	11	Dr Kawashima's Brain Training DS	Nintendo	80%	Genuinely strengthens your mind via plenty of tests, and does it well. That's it, really.
18	▼	16	28	-	The Legend of Spyro: A New Beginning PS2 XBOX GBA DS	Vivendi	70%	Plays more like a scrolling beat-'em-up, and you know what? It's pretty damn good fun.
19	▲	19	17	17	Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories PSP GOLD AWARD	Take 2	90%	A sidestep instead of a leap forward – but a great sidestep nevertheless.
20	NEW	-	-	-	F.E.A.R. PC 360	Vivendi	82%	A technically superb conversion of a superlative shooter, if a bit creaky.

Software charts compiled by ChartTrack, ©2006 ELSPA (UK) Ltd. www.elspa.com Words: Rob Taylor

01 NFS: Carbon

As much as we like to pimp our rides, tune our suspensions, add cute little blue neon to our foot wells and so on and so forth, even we have to admit that the *NFS* series is in serious danger of stalling at the mo. But does that stop all you chavvy types from going out and blowing your petrol money on it? Obviously not. C'mon fellas – what's wrong with a Morris Minor or Maxi Traveller? Honestly.

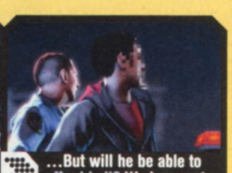
02 Call of Duty 3

We must have massacred the entire population of Deutschland to the power of ten by now, but still those dastardly Jerries keep on coming – and we still love to mow 'em down like ripe hay! Treyarch have done a top job by picking up Infinity Ward's baton, and that virtual rain felt so real we had to pop our shower caps on before we recommenced bashing the Bosch.

03 Medieval 2: Total War

The historian Hobsbawm famously declared that life is "nasty, brutish and short". And while the *Medieval* is undoubtedly both of the former, this game is *anything* but short. We've assassinated the Pope, massacred the Gauls, launched crusades to smite the infidels and pillaged the New World but is our lust for power and blood sated? Not on your nelly…

Spoilt US git Jimmy got an RX-8 for graduating…



…But will he be able to afford bail? We hope not.

"My father's in the belly of that steel beast!"

Fritz was about to go all Neo on the GI's ass.

The 'best shield' bragging competition turned ugly…

Once more *Inca* the breach, dear friends!"

Japan Charts

The obsession with all things *Brain Training* continues apace in Japan…

1	Imasara Hitoniwa Kikenai Otona no Joushikiryoku Training DS
2	Pokemon Diamond DS
3	Tales of the Tempest DS
4	Pokemon Pearl DS
5	Utaware Rumono Aquaplus PS2
6	Ace Combat X: Skies of Deception PSP
7	Jojo's Bizarre Adventure: Phantom Blood PS2
8	Zaidan Houjin Nihon Kanji Nouryoku Kentei Kyoukai Kounin Kanken DS
9	New Super Mario Bros. DS
10	Ryuga Gotoku PS2

US Charts

Gears tightens its stranglehold on US blasting fans.

1	Gears of War 360
2	Final Fantasy 12 PS2
3	Final Fantasy 3 DS
4	Guitar Hero 2 PS2
5	New Super Mario Bros. DS
6	World of Warcraft: Burning Crusade PC
7	Brain Age DS
8	Nintendogs Labrador Retriever & Friends DS
9	The Sims 2: Pets PC
10	Call of Duty 3 360

ELITE 3 AND 4?

David Braben, one of *GM's* all-time gaming heroes, has recently broken his silence on all things *Elite* to speculate that his classic space trading sim and its sequel *Frontier* might soon be available on Live Marketplace. Braben also suggested that not one, but *two*, new versions of *Elite* are in the pipeline – a bona fide sequel to *Frontier* plus some kind of multi-player offering – but not a massively multi-player online affair (but that remains his ultimate dream).

PARIS DS

As if Nintendo's recently girly pink DS Lite wasn't enough, any loaded ladies will be enraptured by the extremely bling Swarovski crystal Pink Nintendo DS. Encrusted with over 1,200 of the blighters and inspired by Paris Hilton, this kitsch piece of kit will set you back a whopping £360. Our verdict? The perfect Valentine's Day girl for the gaming girl who really does have (and presumably wants) everything...

WATCH OUT FOR...

Look out for these latest games to hit the shelves...

THIS MONTH
RESIDENT EVIL 4

At last PC owners have the chance to play one of the best games of 2005 in all its virus-riddled loveliness.

NEXT MONTH
CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN

Dodge through the dead in Dracula's Castle once again – we can't wait for the new *Castlevania* on DS.

3 MONTHS
RATCHET & CLANK: SIZE MATTERS

The duo make their debut on PSP in April with a game that returns to the series' roots, apparently.

FUTURE
STUNTMAN 2

We loved the last game, which means we can't wait to see next-gen Stuntman and play at being James Bond's stunt driver again.

Cut it out and stick it on the wall

COMING SOON

JANUARY 2007

12th	Elite Beat Agents DS	Nintendo
12th	Custom Robo Arena DS	Nintendo
12th	Lost Planet 360	Capcom
12th	World Of Warcraft: Burning Crusade PC	Blizzard
12th	Actionloop DS	Nintendo
26th	Battalion Wars 2 Wii	Nintendo
26th	Charlotte's Web GBA PC DS	Sega
26th	Chibi Robo: Park Patrol DS	Nintendo
26th	Crackdown 360	Microsoft
26th	Diddy Kong Racing DS	Nintendo
26th	Harvest Moon DS DS	Rising Star
26th	Mario Slam Basketball DS	Nintendo
26th	Mario Strikers Charged Wii	Nintendo
26th	Resident Evil 4 PC	Capcom
26th	SEGA Mega Drive Collection PS2 PSP	Sega
26th	Saint Seiya: The Hades PS2	Atari
26th	The Legend Of Zelda: Phantom Hourglass DS	Nintendo
26th	Super Paper Mario CUBE	Nintendo
26th	Wario Ware: Smooth Moves Wii	Nintendo
26th	Jade Empire PC	Take Two

FEBRUARY

2nd	Arthur And The Invisibles PS2 PC DS	Atari
2nd	Capcom Classics Collection 2 PS2	Capcom
9th	Battlezone PSP	Atari
9th	Okami PS2	Capcom
16th	Capcom Puzzle World PSP	Capcom
16th	Contact DS	Rising Star
16th	God Hand PS2	Capcom
16th	New Zealand Story Revolution DS	Rising Star
16th	Test Drive Unlimited PS2 PSP	Atari
23rd	Castlevania: Portrait Of Ruin DS	Konami
23rd	Dragon Quest Heroes: Rocket Slime DS	Square Enix
23rd	Excite Truck Wii	Nintendo
23rd	Hot PXL PSP	Atari
23rd	Kirby DS DS	Nintendo
23rd	Maelstrom PC	Codemasters
23rd	Metroid Prime 3: Corruption Wii	Nintendo
TBC	Bullet Witch 360	Atari
TBC	Chilli Con Carnage PSP	Eidos
TBC	Tomb Raider 10th Anniversary Edition PS2 PC PSP	????

TO BE CONFIRMED 2007

TBC	Super Mario Galaxy Wii	Nintendo
TBC	Alan Wake 360	Microsoft
TBC	Alone In The Dark 360	Atari
TBC	Army Of Two 360	EA
TBC	Assassin's Creed 360	Ubisoft
TBC	Big Brain Academy Wii	Nintendo
TBC	Bioshock PC 360	Take Two
TBC	Blue Dragon 360	Microsoft
TBC	Brothers In Arms: Hells Highway 360	Ubisoft
TBC	Children Of Mana DS	Square Enix
TBC	Coded Arms Contagion PSP	Konami
TBC	Crysis PC	EA
TBC	Enemy Territory: Quake Wars PC	Activision
TBC	Forza Motorsport 2 360	Microsoft
TBC	Frontlines: Fuel Of War 360	THQ
TBC	Full Auto 2: Battlelines PS3	Sega
TBC	Haze 360	Ubisoft
TBC	Lost Odyssey 360	Microsoft
TBC	Mario Vs Donkey Kong 2 DS	Nintendo
TBC	Mass Effect 360	Microsoft
TBC	Medal Of Honor: Airborne 360	EA
TBC	Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops PSP	Konami
TBC	Phoenix Wright Ace Attorney: Justice For All DS	Capcom
TBC	Pokemon Ranger DS	Nintendo
TBC	S.T.A.L.K.E.R. PC	THQ
TBC	Stanglehold 360	Midway
TBC	Super Smash Bros Brawl Wii	Nintendo
TBC	Devil May Cry 4 PS3	Capcom
TBC	Colin Mcrae 2007 360 PS3	Codemasters
TBC	Elebits (Wii)	Konami

Heed Our Warning:
Here at *GM* we endeavour to bring you the most accurate release dates around. But the games industry is a fickle beast so bear in mind that the info above is constantly on the move. If it doesn't come out when we say it does, blame someone else!

GMOST WA MGAMES

THE HOTTEST GAMES OF TOMORROW!

A Happy New Console Year to everyone. If you're reading this, chances are there's either a new console under your telly *right now* or you're already tucking in to some cracking next-gen offerings – the question is, once you're done with your *Zelda* or *Gears of War*, what next?

Well, it couldn't be easier – the answers are right here within these very pages. We've wracked our collective brains to bring you a massive, *massive* list of next year's biggest – and not so biggest – games of 2007. Have a flick through, go on – we gaurantee you'll find a handful of games to save up for and look forward to over the next 12 months.

Whether you've got a Wii, Xbox 360 or are still holding out for a PS3, it's safe to say that the gaming calendar has never been so stuffed full of digital goodness. So loosen your belts and wallets, folks – days, weeks and months of videogaming gluttony is upon us! Happy New Year everyone!

Geraint, Deputy Editor

	GAME NAME	WHAT IS IT?	WHAT WE'VE GOT	WHY WE WANT IT
1	GRAND THEFT AUTO 4	The one big game of 2007 that everyone can agree on – Rockstar's ever-brilliant free-roaming crime caper. (PS3 and Xbox 360)	Nothing but rumours, a logo and our own vivid imagination right now. What new features might it have? See page 34.	Because nothing beats the feeling of jumping into a new motor, tuning in to *GTA's* fantastic sountrack and cruising the streets looking for trouble. On next-gen consoles, the experience looks set to reach giddy new heights!
2	HALO 3	Last part of the trilogy – a series that ripped the rule book into tiny pieces. (Xbox 360)	Some lovely new multi-player map shots on page 24.	With (probably) more hard cash being thrown at it that the entire Latvian economy, you can only expect FPS-smashing greatness to come from the boys at developers Bungie. Here's hoping the story's a bit better this time around, eh?
3	MARIO GALAXY	A new platformer (billed as the true sequel to the ground-breaking *Mario 64*) that sees the plumber scampering over asteroids! (Wii only)	Nothing in the way of new shots – more's the pity. No surprise really, given that you can't expect this to hit your Wiis until the end of next year…	Because those mega-brained Nintendo geniuses won't stop until they've burned out their collective gaming-cortex to deliver a platformer that can *stop time itself* through sheer quality.
4	BIOSHOCK	It's a first-person shooter that's set in an underwater wonderland gone bad through man's genetic meddling. (PC and Xbox 360)	It's all quiet on the *BioShock* front this month – we expect to hear a whole lot more come Spring…	The art-deco-furnished levels, the brooding atmosphere the water effects that drop your jaw to the floor, and the thoughts of stoving little demon-girls' heads in.
5	ASSASSIN'S CREED	Skulk your way around crusade-era castles and fortresses, dishing out silent justice. (PS3, Xbox 360)	This is another one that's gone a bit quiet. Ubisoft are busy beavering away on it, to make it their biggest game of 2007.	Ubisoft have their finest talent sculpting it into a thing of wonder. It seems to combine the best properties of their greatest games, *Prince of Persia* and *Splinter Cell*.
6	CRYSIS	The jungle-based FPS that PC owners should get ready to upgrade for. (PC only)	Turn to page 28 if you want to refresh your memory – but this still some way off. Expect to see new info here very soon…	It'll be the greatest-looking game human eyes have ever seen – lush jungles frozen over with freeze-rays of doom, ready to be smashed to smithereens.
7	SPORE	*Sims* creator Will Wright's project, that's about *a million years* in the making. Take a tiny organism and grow it into a mega-species. (PC only)	Page 28 has the rough details if you've never heard of it before. We'll batter down EA's front door for a hands-on next year.	If *Crysis* is all about the graphics, then this is all about originality, bringing new concepts to the table and turning it into a genre-busting super-game. You've never played anything quite like it, that's for certain!
8	METAL GEAR SOLID 4	Number four in the original stealth series. This time with added camouflage suit, chicken robots and an ancient Snake! (PS3 only)	Get in! A ton of new shots and details – all of which you can find in our big preview over on page 36. Sometimes we're just *too* kind.	Because it'll be the first PS3 game that truly shows off what the machine can do – and who better to be in charge than god-like developer Hideo Kojima. If this doesn't persuade you to buy a PS3, nothing will.
9	SMASH BROS BRAWL	Four-player scrapper featuring all your Nintendo favourites. Its predecessor was the best selling GameCube game! (Wii only)	We've got brand spanking new shots and details over on page 26. Hopefully we won't have too long to wait before we can play it…	It's one of the best multi-player games ever made – and now the character list is even bigger, inlcuding Solid Snake, Wario and Samus!
10	FINAL FANTASY 13	Yet another installment of the RPG the Japanese can't get enough of — this time with a more sci-fi feel. And giant swords. (PS3 only)	Well, considering *Final Fantasy 12* isn't even out in the UK yet, not a whole lot aside from what was shown at E3 way back in may…	*Final Fantasy 13* isn't just good, it might be *exceptionally* good. Square have already proven they can breath new life into an old dog, and if they continue in this way, then *FF13* should be something to savour.

TEAM PICKS

Team *GM's* secret game-loves exposed!

Editor: Robin
GRAND THEFT AUTO 4

It'll be the biggest game ever. Can't wait to see what Rockstar bring us.

Dep. Ed: Geraint
MASS EFFECT

Epic universe-spanning RPG – it's *KotoR* but without the Wookies!

Prod. Ed: Jes
METROID PRIME 3

Wii can't do a decent FPS? Metroid Prime 3 could prove otherwise.

News Ed: Rob
ALAN WAKE

Best. Cardigan. Ever. It's the next-gen knitwear I've been looking for!

Reviews Ed: Kath
MARIO GALAXY

New Mario, new control system. This'll be as great as *Mario 64!*

NTED

WHO ARE... SALEM & RIOS

WHERE ARE THEY FROM?
From EA's *Army of Two*, Rios (left) and Salem (right) hail from locations unknown, since they're an undercover mercenary team paid to carry out paramilitary operations for high-bidding governments.

WHAT'S THEIR MOTIVATION?
Hard cash, and the opportunity to prove that they're the best in their field. Rios is a veteran soldier, Salem his reckless trainee. Both have major points to prove to one another.

SPECIAL POWERS
Salem and Rios are inseparable on the battlefield, providing covering fire and watching each other's back like beady-eyed hawks. Their link is almost telepathic, from anticipating each other's movements to tossing fresh ammo clips whenever one of the pair is running low. They could almost be brothers. Or even *lovers*. (*No* – Ed)

WEAKNESSES
Their constant bickering over tactics is hardly professional.

ANYTHING ELSE?
Bunking up for a spot of two-man parachuting looks a bit dodgy. Personally, we'd insist on our own 'chute – nothing makes you a target quite like being strapped to a fat man.

SHOT OF THE MONTH!

It's been a while since we've seen anything on this, so a new batch of completely mental *Elebits* shots is more than enough to raise a smile.

? TELL US MORE!

Rebecca Chambers is a giant! We'd better have a word with the art staff...

RESIDENT EVIL: UMBRELLA CHRONICLES

Wii-only *Resi* game that'll take scenes from every episode in the series – using an advanced version of the *Resi 4* engine.

LEAST WANTED

Fight big robots in a rubbish stylee. Dreadful. Underwhelming.

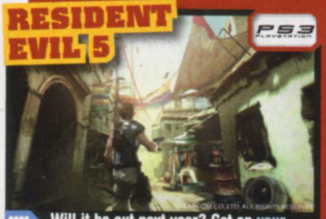
ARMORED CORE 4

Geraint queued up for ages at the Tokyo Game Show to play this. As Jes puts it, 'You're an idiot. Everyone knows it *stinks of ass!*'. Never a truer word spoken!

ONE TO WATCH

You're going to want these. Oh yes.

RESIDENT EVIL 5

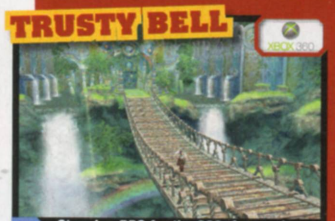


Will it be out next year? Get on your knees and pray to make it happen.

DAY OF DISASTER

A game based on surviving natural disasters. Robin thinks it'll be ace!

TRUSTY BELL

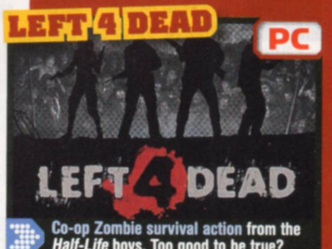


Stunning RPG for the 360. A console blessed with such things recently.

STRANGLEHOLD

The most destructive and stylish third-person gunplay we've seen in ages.

LEFT 4 DEAD



Co-op Zombie survival action from the *Half-Life* boys. Too good to be true?

YOUR MOST WANTED!

There are almost 200 new games looming on the horizon – we'd like you to let us know which ones you're most looking forward to. Scribble down your top five and send it in, and we'll make sure we hunt them down for you!

MY TOP 5

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Send to: My Top Five!, GamesMaster Mag, Future, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW
Or email us at: gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk

MONGOOSE

Still in Valhalla, and check this baby out! This is the Mongoose, an ATV that was designed for *Halo 2* but didn't make it in. It can hold two players (and a flag), but has no offensive capabilities – it exists to get you from A to B as soon as possible – and it moves like a greased whippet. The good news is, you can fire while riding.

4

GM MOST WANTED GAME

UPDATE!

NEW HALO 3 SHOTS! BLIMEY!

NEED TO KNOW

WHAT IS IT?

The third part of the *Halo* trilogy, picking up where *Halo 2* left off...

FACTS

- Single-player campaign that wraps up the *Halo* story, especially the maddening cliffhanger at the end of *Halo 2!*
- Brand-new multi-player modes with new vehicles, weapons and maps

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Halo..... 96%
Halo 2..... 95%

■ **OUT:** NOVEMBER 2007 ■ **FORMATS:** XBOX 60 ■ **DEVELOPER:** BUNGIE ■ **PUBLISHER:** MICROSOFT
■ **ONLINE:** DEATHMATCHES, CO-OP ■ **WEB:** BUNGIE.NET ■ **PLAYERS:** TBA

HALO 3

The biggest game of 2007? Probably!

Ahh, *Halo*. Microsoft's trusty lifeguard. Without *Halo: Combat Evolved*, the original Xbox would have drowned on arrival. Follow-up *Halo 2*, in turn, helped keep the fledgling Xbox Live service's head above water. But buoyed by a seven million console headstart, the Xbox 360 is paddling around like a rascally, cheeky-beaked duck – is the final slice of this trilogy a spacewalk too far?

Short answer: nope. The roof nearly came off the top of the world when *Halo 3's* initial trailer was announced, despite it featuring little more than the Chief wandering around casting dynamic shadows and reflections like he just didn't care. Master Chief's third adventure is still

"PLAY A MULTI-PLAYER DEMO THIS SPRING..."

VALHALLA

See that giant rifle? We'll get to that in a minute. For now, concentrate on the vast, mountainous terrain of Valhalla, the multi-player map that stole the show. This symmetrical map reminds us of Blood Gulch – bases on opposite sides, powerful weapons at the level's high points and a big wide open area in the centre perfect for bloodbaths.

3

IT'S THE CHIEF!

This is the only campaign mode shot that exists, a deliberately non-descriptive shot showing off Master Chief in his natural habitat – the warzone. What is noticable is how polished and shiny our helmeted hero is. Oh, and here's a rumour for you: four. Player. Co-op. How good would that be? *Gears of War 2* will certainly have a lot to live up to...

1

2

HIGHGROUND

This is Highground, one of three multi-player maps demonstrated to journos. It's closest to *Halo 2's* Zanzibar level if comparisons have to be made, with a huge steel gate (pictured) just begging to be opened by the team on the offence. There are two sneaky passageways that can lead you to the gate-raising red switch.

obviously in great demand. So where next for the Xbox 360's most wanted game?

The answer is, it's being beamed straight into your home. Bungie have announced that a multi-player demo will be available on Xbox Live Marketplace this Spring – a full six months before *Halo 3* hits the stores. Why so early? Well, it's a public playtest – you'll be able to give feedback to developers Bungie who will consider your requests and could even implement YOUR ideas into the final version! How cool is that?

About as cool as this: Spring 2007 will also see the release of several new Halo 2 multi-player maps – although sadly they'll only be downloadable on Xbox 360. Bungie are guarding the map blueprints tightly – but promise they're going to be incredible. That's seven million itchy trigger fingers well and truly scratched.

SNOWBOUND

A small, contained map which is guarded at the perimeter by several sentry guns who will shoot any yellow-backed Spartans trying to flee the playing area! Smack-dab in the middle of the map is a gigantic structure that we're told is a reference to the Forerunners...

WE (HATE) VEHICLES

We were going to tell you about that new weapon we mentioned a few panels back, but it looks like we got here a little too late for ol' Red here. The Spartan Laser, as it's called, is a cross between a sniper rifle and a rocket launcher, able to take vehicles out at a trigger press. A long trigger press, mind, as you need to charge this bad boy up for a few seconds before it does its worst.

IN CONTROL

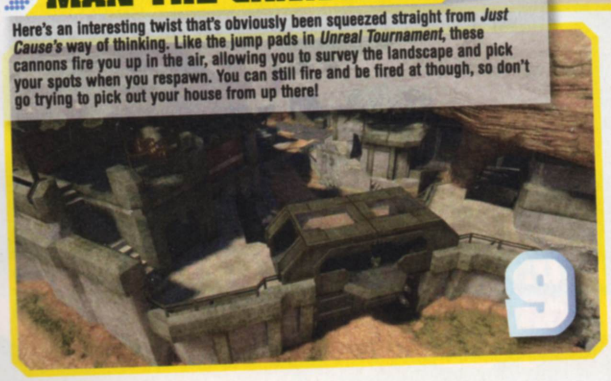
Bungie aren't afraid to play around with greatness and it's paid dividends with a refined control system that practically makes your fingers purr. Reloading is now tasked to the bumper buttons, one for each weapon – you can still dual-wield, see? In fact, RB is also used to hop aboard vehicles and the like – so what is X's new function? It's a dark, mysterious secret right now.

MATCHES

Xbox Live Public is Bungie's new brain-baby, designed to address one of *Halo 2*'s few problems. Now custom matches can be 'advertised' and other online users can hunt down the exact type of maps they're looking for using Halo 3's powerful search functions. Oh, one more thing – still no bots. Bungie refuse to do bots.

MAN THE CANNONS

Here's an interesting twist that's obviously been squeezed straight from *Just Cause*'s way of thinking. Like the jump pads in *Unreal Tournament*, these cannons fire you up in the air, allowing you to survey the landscape and pick your spots when you respawn. You can still fire and be fired at though, so don't go trying to pick out your house from up there!



MORE WEAPONS!

Sticking red hot spikes in your enemies' skull is the new, um, black. Firstly, we've got the one-handed Brute Spiker, a suitably nasty weapon we picked up in Highground that allows you to offload a double helping of spikes into the opposition's bonce as and when you fancy. Then there's the accompanying Nail Grenade, which can either be tossed conventionally or attached to a surface.

HANDS ON

PREVIEWER: Alex

HOW FINISHED? 3 of 12

CONTROLS

- A - Jump
- Y - Melee
- X - It's a mystery!
- R - Fire weapon
- L - Fire weapon
- Grenade
- L bumper - Reload
- R bumper - Reload

WE SAW IT AT...

Bungie held a secret showing at a secret location. Secretive!

WHAT WE SAW

- ✓ Highground map
- ✓ Valhalla map
- ✓ The Mongoose
- ✗ Single-player

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Bungie promise great innovation and huge gales of change in the single-player campaign levels, and we're promised incredible twists and turns a-go-go. Multi-player, however, is deliberately true to *Halo's* roots. Fans of *Halo 2's* online play will feel instantly at home and the familiarity of the level's structures reflect this. That's not to say that there aren't changes, but we're pleased to report that additions such as the man cannons enhance rather than unbalance *Halo 3's* maps.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Lacks some technical gloss with textures and weather effects very conspicuous by their absence, but from early impressions this will deliver.

BEST BIT SO FAR

You get the feeling the best is yet to come, but one thing that caught our eye in a very brief single player demo was this: for the first time, you're accompanied by Spartan AI. Should be incredible to play.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES

+ The new weapons – blowing up vehicles rules!

GM HATES

- Only brief glimpse of single player – looks nice, but is it going to be neglected again?

MOST WANTED RATING 5

A completely different shooter to *Gears of War*, but what it does share in common is what makes *Gears* so brilliant – fun, *intelligent* design. It's be amazing.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE:..... Halo 2, 95%
BIGGEST RIVAL..... Oblivion, ... 93%
OUT SOONER: Half-Life 2: Ep2

XBOX 360 PS3 Wii

DOG'S LIFE

It's the special attacks that really make us smile in *Brawl*. Mario's fireball, Pikachu's lightning – oh yeah, and that *Nintendogs* Labrador pup smacking into the screen to obscure your opponents' view! Sick but hilarious.

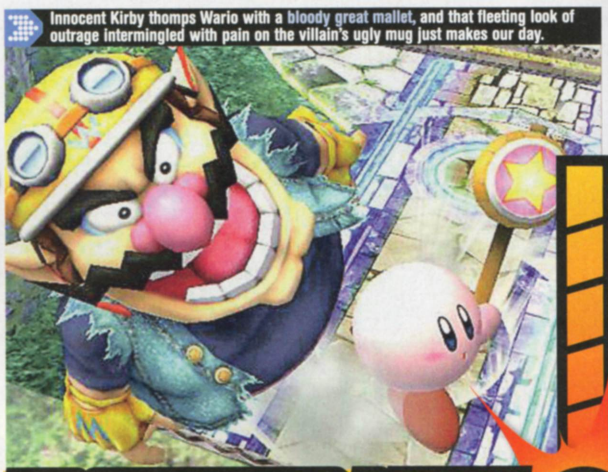
Angelic Greek meets Italian plumber. Chaos ensues.

Link's back, and his Master Sword brings the pain.

SUPER SMASH BROS. BRAWL

Mario dukes it out!

OUT: TBC 2007 ■ **FORMATS:** Wii ■ **DEVELOPER:** NINTENDO ■ **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO ■ **ONLINE:** TBA
WEB: WWW.SMASHBROS.COM ■ **PLAYERS:** 1-4



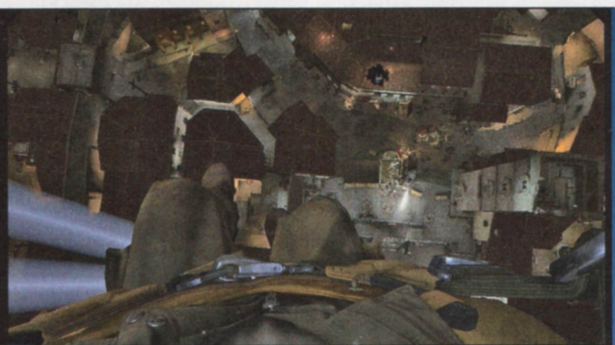
Innocent Kirby thomps Wario with a bloody great mallet, and that fleeting look of outrage intermingled with pain on the villain's ugly mug just makes our day.

We can't get enough of *Smash Bros.* here at *GM*, with Geraint and Jes particularly fond of bashing one another's skull in come lunchtime.

Interestingly, it's looking likely that you *won't* be able to use the Wii remote or nunchuk to direct battles in this Wii update – that'd just be too chaotic. Instead, *Brawl* requires you to use the Wii's 'classic' control pad. With some mental new combatants including Solid Snake, Samus, Pit from *Kid Icarus* and Meta Knight set to shake things up, we're even more excited about this than *Virtua Fighter 4*. And that's *really* excited. **Rob** GM

MOST WANTED RATING 5

We still can't quite figure out *why*, but watching Mario, Link, Pikachu and Kirby duke it out remains the stuff of gaming genius. Almost certain to assume cult classic status when it arrives early next year.



You might land in a tree and end up riddled with bullets by Jerry, but the view from up here is *spectacular...*

OUT: TBC 2007 ■ **DEV:** EA ■ **PUB:** EA PS3 360 PC

MEDAL OF HONOR AIRBORNE™

Chocks awaaaaaaay!

When *Airborne* originally parachuted out last January to a decidedly lukewarm reception, it was quickly frogmarched away by EA for a spell in boot camp. And rightly so – the tacked-on parachuting segments failed to hide the fact that it was patently no *Call of Duty 2*.

However, the sprawling new battlefields and branching level paths appear to hint at a *MOH* that captures the chaos of war in more than one respect – you'll now be scurrying around levels searching for objectives while desperately trying to stay alive.

This new sandbox approach to combat sounds tops – *GTA* meets WW2? **Geraint** GM

Mmm, delectable lighting effects and a look that reminds us a teeny bit of *Return to Castle Wolfenstein*. Zombie Nazis anyone?

MOST WANTED RATING 3

Call of Duty has given *MoH* such a pasting recently that we'd taken to wearing red poppies each year to commemorate its demise. However, *Airborne* could just be the start of a glorious new chapter...

OUT: TBC 2007 ■ **FORMATS:** PS3 ■ **DEVELOPER:** POLYPHONY DIGITAL ■ **PUBLISHER:** SONY
ONLINE: TBC ■ **WEB:** WWW.POLYPHONY.CO.JP/ENGLISH ■ **PLAYERS:** TBC

GRAN TURISMO HD

Driving just went high def...

Everybody who fancies themselves as a budding Jenson Button loves a bit of *Gran Turismo*, from Dad to your little sis. There's just something about being behind the wheel of extravagant motors and feeling like *you're almost there*.

Recently though, next-gen rides like *Gotham 3* and *MotorStorm* have left *GT* looking more than a little dated, and this high-res port doesn't quite have the required oomph in the engine department to redress the balance.

We recently took *GT HD* for a spin around the stunning yet technically demanding Eiger Nordwand course, and while the lighting effects and car models rivalled the best we'd ever clapped eyes on there were certain trackside details that hinted at the game's last-gen roots.

Still, the immaculately tweaked handling and staggeringly realistic driving physics – the major hallmarks of any *GT* experience – were there in spades, and there's no doubting the graphical boost all that *HD* upscaling provides.

This'll certainly be jostling near the front of the grid when it comes to pedigree PS3 racers... **Rob** GM

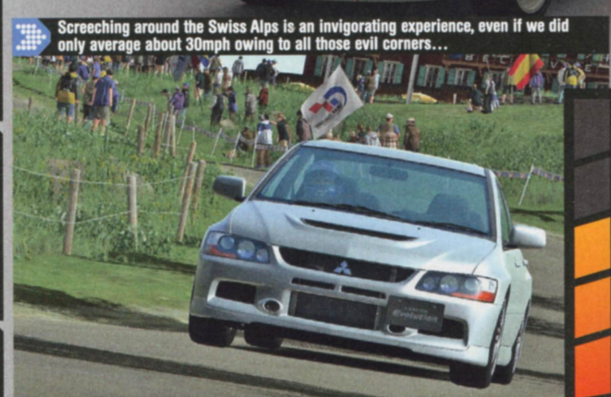
GO! GO! GO!

...As Murray Walker used to say. With its wide variety of tracks and autos, this caters for every kind of racing fan...

Memorise tracks to do these 200mph monsters justice.

Pile-ups aplenty! Shame there's still no damage

There's even time for a spot of rallying in *GT HD*.



Screeching around the Swiss Alps is an invigorating experience, even if we did only average about 30mph owing to all those evil corners...

MOST WANTED RATING 3

The *Real Driving Simulator* just got a million times prettier, but take away the incredible scenery and car models and you're left with a near identical experience to *Gran Turismo 4*.

PC XBOX 360 PS3

CRACKDOWN

Where super cops lay the smack down...

Next-gen is great at doing crowds, and we just *love* seeing the suckers scatter in panic as fights spill out into shopping districts. Take that SUV moms!

360 ■ OUT: JANUARY 2007 ■ PUB: MICROSOFT

CITY LIMITS

There's a grand sense of scale to Pacific City, from tearing around at 100mph to clinging perilously from the top of a skyscraper...

Quirky visuals: retro meets futuristic meets cel-shaded.

Being a superhero means you *can* fall 100ft. Doh!

GTA might have come on a fair bit since Dave Jones's PSone classic, but that doesn't mean that he doesn't still have the magic. Enter *Crackdown*, the story of a bionic super-agent trying to stamp out crime in Pacific City. A five-way skill system (strength, firearms, driving, agility and explosives) ensures there's plenty of depth along with all that leaping from building to building

System link and online co-op promises larks aplenty, but – even cooler – the vehicles that you drive auto-pimp themselves according to how pumped your stats are. Aces! **Robin**

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Could *GTA4* actually seem *dated* after the freedom of superhero powers in a sandbox world? Probably not, but *Crackdown* is shaping up to be summat that bit different.

PC PS3 ■ OUT: MARCH 2007 ■ DEV: EPIC ■ PUB: MIDWAY
■ ONLINE: YES ■ WEB: WWW.UNREALTOURNAMENT2007.COM

Unreal TOURNAMENT 2007

Now coming to a PS3 near you...

With Epic currently riding the crest of a wave with the magnificent *Gears of War*, confidence must be running high. And no wonder – they can honestly claim to have the best graphics engine in existence, so you can understand why we're literally foaming at the mouth for *Unreal Tournament 2007!*

With *Unreal Tournament 2004* giving the flailing series a burst of much-needed adrenaline, Epic have decided to aim higher this year with an almost total overhaul of the underlying gameplay. Vehicles, weapons, maps (which are often so enormous you can now whizz around them on a hoverboard!) have been rejiggled, along with more realistic gravity, object physics and some seriously deadly AI.

It's also interesting to spot the subtle differences between the Necris and Axon races – and the not-so-subtle differences between their enormous war machines! (Including giant tripds!) With online gaming burgeoning in popularity, *Unreal Tournament 2007* is going to rock PC and PS3 owners worlds' in 2007 – see you online soon, readers! **Rob**

RUN AWAY!

There's a lot of emphasis in *UT2K7* on preposterously powerful, behemoth-like vehicles dispensing napalm pain on our tiny little grunts.

Meet the Leviathan, a turret-touting Axon war machine.

Dark Walkers – ripped straight from *War of the Worlds?*

Not quite as camp as Fenix and co, but not far off...

Observe the juxtaposition of pretty Chinese lanterns with flying shreds of depleted uranium and steaming lumps of bloody charnel. Mmm, charming.

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Combining *Gears of War's* graphical punch with spot-on multi-player gameplay that's been refined over a decade of hard graft, this is going to be *massive* online. Watch out for another epic...

HAZE

PC 360 PS3 ■ FROM: SUMMER 2007 ■ PUB: UBISOFT

It's almost a foregone conclusion that *Crysis* is going to romp home as FPS of 2007, but we've developed a little bit of a soft spot for *Haze* since Ubi's amusing E3 presentation. A satirical exploration of government cover-ups and gung-ho mercenary armies, there's also some seriously gory, steroid-happy combat in here, from the makers of *TimeSplitters*. **Rob**

These hired guns don't take prisoners – watch as they turn innocent civilians into mincemeat.

MOST WANTED RATING 3

Jungles are all a bit passé these days, but if *Haze* can supply enough high-octane action to accompany the chortlesome storyline this could prove engaging.

MERCENARIES 2: WORLD IN FLAMES

PS3 ■ FROM: MARCH 2007 ■ DEV: PANDEMIC ■ PUB: TBA

Mattias and Fiona return for another sesh of paid-for pain. This time the urban sprawl of Korea is out, replaced by the lush tropics of Venezuela as the gang aims to take down a bloated oil conglomerate. **Geraint**

It's all about the co-op in *World in Flames* – at any point player two can dive into the action.

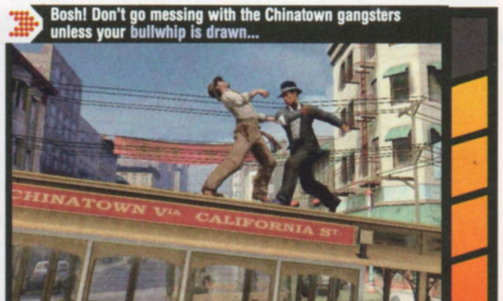
MOST WANTED RATING 4

With a grappling hook straight out of *Just Cause*, incredible physics and damage effects *and* PS3 exclusivity, this could be the ace up Sony's sleeve.

INDIANA JONES

360 PS3 ■ FROM: AUTUMN 2007 ■ PUB: LUCASARTS

The time is 1939, the place is San Francisco and there are two special things about this new *Indy:* 'behavioural AI' and 'DMM technology'. The former involves your foes reacting in organic ways to your attacks and their environments, while the latter allows LucasArts to give objects like crates and glass ultra realistic physical properties. Coo! **Kath**



Bosh! Don't go messing with the Chinatown gangsters unless your bullwhip is drawn...

MOST WANTED RATING 4

After *The Emperor's Tomb* we're holding back on that sacred '5' rating, but all the signs are pointing to the best dose of Indy action since *The Fate of Atlantis.*

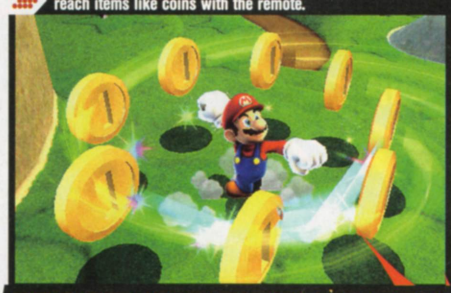
GM MOST WANTED GAMES 2007

SUPER MARIO GALAXY

OUT: TBC 2007 **FROM:** NINTENDO Wii

Zelda's come early to the Wii, which leaves us waiting and speculating about *Mario* – particularly *Mario Galaxy*. And from what we've seen so far it's going to be fab. Mario, bouncing and leaping around the galaxy from star to planet, splattering Goombas with his old spin attack that's now pulled off by shaking the Wii remote. Beautiful. **Kath**

The new control system allows you to highlight out-of-reach items like coins with the remote.



MOST WANTED RATING 5

It's firmly sitting on top of our Wii most wanted list for 2007. We've seen the first gravity-defying demo and now we're gagging for more...

METROID PRIME 3

OUT: TBC 2007 **FROM:** NINTENDO Wii

Metroid has already proven the virtues of first-person touch-screen gaming on the DS. It's also set to do the same for remote-waving play on Wii. There's another war raging across the universe, led by the eternally annoying Dark Samus and it's up to you, Samus (good Samus) to stop it. Expect new weapons and special moves. **Geraint**

That familiar visor view is back and now the game has added Wii features...

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Perfectly suited to the Wii – there's going to be precision rolling and shooting and a whole new *Metroid* adventure for fans. Hopefully top multi-player, too.

SPORE

OUT: TBC 2007 **FROM:** EA PC

Spore maker Will Wright's genius mind has already created *Sim City* and *The Sims*. So that should give you an idea of how big and important this game is. In fact, it's probably the most ambitious game ever. Instead of creating households or cities, you're creating entire species and watching them evolve over millions of in-game years. It's survival of the fittest! **Robin**

Can evolution really support a boggle eyed creature who sheds love hearts? *Spore* will answer that question.

MOST WANTED RATING 5

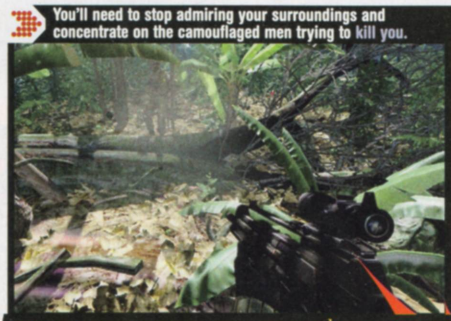
It's been in the making for a while now. We've created unique species with the creation system – now we just wait to see how the whole thing works.

CRYSIS

OUT: TBC 2007 **FROM:** EA PC

It's like *Far Cry* but better – words that should make any PC gamer sit up and take notice. *Crysis* is being made by *Far Cry* creators Crytek and while it's a similar style of game – all lush outdoor island and guns – it's most definitely a big step on from it. You play as US soldier Jake, who's been sent with a team to investigate a meteorite crash on a remote island. Fortunately you've got half an armoury at your disposal. **Rob**

You'll need to stop admiring your surroundings and concentrate on the camouflaged men trying to kill you.



MOST WANTED RATING 5

Possibly the best looking game on any format ever, much has been made of the visuals. But the gameplay isn't shaping up to be shoddy either.

THE OUTSIDER

OUT: TBC **FROM:** FRONTIER 360 PS3

There's a chance this isn't going to make it to the shop shelves for 2007, but *The Outsider* is well worth a mention anyway. The game takes place in Washington DC and starts with your character being accused wrongly of doing something. The rest of the game is completely non-linear in every way, including the storyline. Apparently your decisions won't just be 'good' and 'bad' – this is going to be complex stuff. **Geraint**

Washington DC is looking fantastic in the game – and those cops are looking scary.

MOST WANTED RATING 4

An evolving storyline and arsenal of technology and weaponry should make this the next *Mission Impossible*. Very promising.

WARIOWARE: SMOOTH MOVES

OUT: JANUARY 2007 **FROM:** NINTENDO Wii

Practically everyone must be familiar with the concept behind *WarioWare* now there's been a release on every Nintendo system known to man. One mini-game after another is thrown at you in random order, each demanding super-quick reactions. The Wii version is shaping up to be the most interesting – now you can 'draw' with the remote, jump with it in your hand and do a million (or around 30) other things. **Kath**

Over 100 mini-games in different categories make up the game and you can go up against other players.

MOST WANTED RATING 5

Nintendo's fantastic explosion of mini-games is shaping up to be better on Wii than any system since it started, thanks to its very versatile controller.

HALO WARS

OUT: TBA 2007 **FROM:** MICROSOFT 360

This is a real-time strategy *Halo*, which takes place prior to the events of *Halo: Combat Evolved*. It's a familiar world – Warthogs and Banshees are just some of the vehicles you can take control of and weapons include plasma guns and battle rifles. Fans and RTS players should be paying attention at least, even if it's lacking Xbox Live deathmatches. **Alex**

The first top-down view of the *Halo* battlefield we've ever seen is looking good. We can't wait to be let loose on it.

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Spin-offs of one of our favourite games of all time can only be welcomed with open arms. It's not being developed by Bungee though...

KANE & LYNCH: DEAD MEN

OUT: TBC 2007 **FROM:** EIDOS 360 PC

Kane and Lynch are prisoners on death row who find themselves broken out of jail by some bad people who then blackmail them into co-operating with them. Prepare for some epic gun fights in huge crowds of bystanders. **Geraint**

Would you trust these two to get something done for you? Especially when one of them is a schizophrenic...

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Dark, gritty stuff from developers with a top pedigree. This could well be our next *Hitman* or *Rainbow Six*.

EIGHT DAYS

OUT: TBC **FROM:** SONY PS3

Taking place in the desert over a period of eight days, this is a badlands tale of thugs and violence. You can lean out of the passenger window of your car to shoot people up, or take cover behind a range of objects. Preferably not a petrol tanker. **Rob**

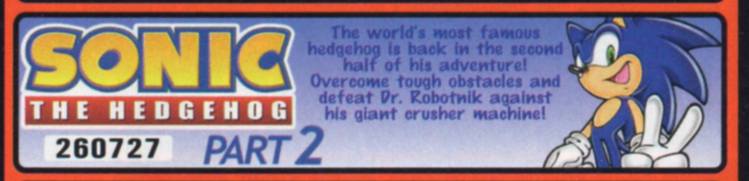
Hopefully this car wasn't on rental because they might notice those ruddy great bullet holes in the bodywork...

MOST WANTED RATING 4

This one's still a bit elusive, but from the demo level we've played so far it's looking like an effect-packed shooter.

TOP 10 MOBILE GAMES
1. Monopoly Tycoon 2007 260733
2. My Dog Mobile Pet 260647
3. Puzzle Bobble 260645
4. LMA Manager 2007 260709
5. Kitty the Kitten Mobile Pet 260702
6. Juiced 260536
7. Urban Golf 260679
8. Fruit Machine 260366
9. Pirates of the Caribbean 2 260696
10. Worms 260714

Once upon a time, Dragon Riders protected the world. Defeated by the Empire, they hid the last dragons' eggs and disappeared.
eragon
260730

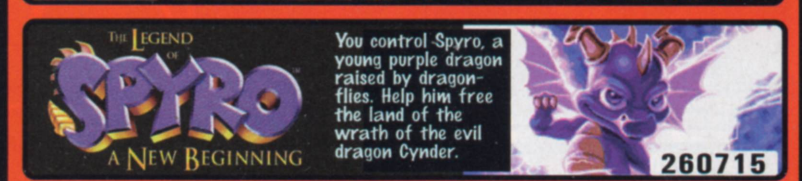

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
260727
PART 2
The world's most famous hedgehog is back in the second half of his adventure! Overcome tough obstacles and defeat Dr. Robotnik against his giant crusher machine!

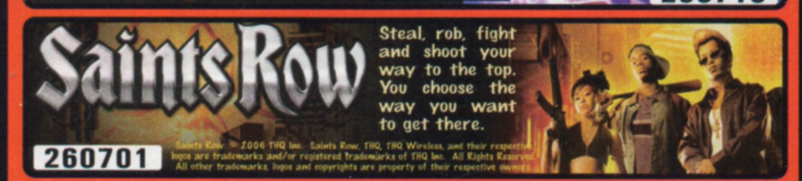
THE INCREDIBLE HULK RAMPAGE!
260625
With total freedom to destroy anything you want this is stress relief on an epic scale!

Pimp My Ride
260706
Tune 4 rides in a stack of mini-games that take you from Rookie to Master. Earn respect & pile on points in bonus rounds as you make your machine into a thing of beauty.
Pimp My Ride under da hood!

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN WEBSLINGER
Take control of Spidey and his super moves as he swings through the streets of New York in this amazing webslingin' adventure!
260708

CALL OF DUTY 3
Fight your way through the Normandy Breakout campaign, the most devastating series of battles in World War II.
260713


THE LEGEND OF SPYRO
A NEW BEGINNING
You control Spyro, a young purple dragon raised by dragonflies. Help him free the land of the wrath of the evil dragon Cynder.
260715



GoodFellas
As far back as I can remember, I always wanted to be a gangster... Now you can rise to the top of the mobster ladder in GoodFellas™ on mobile.
260677

CHUCKIE EGG
260664
Collect all of the eggs in each level of the hen house. Avoid the birds. 100 points for each egg collected, 50 points for each pile of seed collected.
RETRO GAMES
Space Invaders - 260644
Double Dragon - 260638
Paperboy - 260571
'Worms' - 260714
Lemmings - 260431

You must be 16 or over. Games cost £6 (except numbers starting with 28 which cost £7.50). You will also incur your normal SMS and WAP charges. Special Offers End 31/01/2007. This is NOT a subscription service. Compatible handset required. Mobile games currently not available on 3 Network. Partymob.com, PO Box 28 Northampton NN1 5DS. You may be contacted by us with offers. After Sales: Visit www.partymob.com/cs or call 0871 750 3030.

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Partymob.com

ALAN WAKE

■ OUT: 2007 ■ FORMATS: 360, PC ■ DEVELOPER: REMEDY ■ PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT ■ ONLINE: NO
■ WEB: WWW.ALANWAKE.COM ■ PLAYERS: 1

He's almost A. Wake...

It seems like ages since we first caught a glimpse of that billowing red scarf and sniggered at the worst name for a gaming character since... ooh, *Max Payne*, but Remedy's homage to *Twin Peaks* is almost upon us.

Mr Wake, a writer by trade, is having some seriously *weird* dreams – and it seems as if those things that go bump in that night that he's so fond of writing about might just be coming to get *him*. Luckily for Alan he's an insomniac, but his journey to the supposed haven of sleepy Bright Falls might just turn into a waking nightmare...

Sporting the most incredible woodland environments ever (and there's 100km of them!), this could be one of *the* games of 2007, if Remedy can mesh the tight plot with the real-world adventuring. **Rob**

DARKNESS

Themes of darkness and light will play a vital part in Alan's wacky (well, not so wacky, perhaps – possibly more horribly disturbing) adventures. Hint: *the darkness is probably bad.*

Wakey likes night jogging. The monsters behind add motivation.

Is the tornado a figment of Alan's fevered imagination?

1. Stop off at local garage. 2. Collect keys to plush cabin. 3. Avoid axe in skull from insane hillbilly petrol pump attendant.

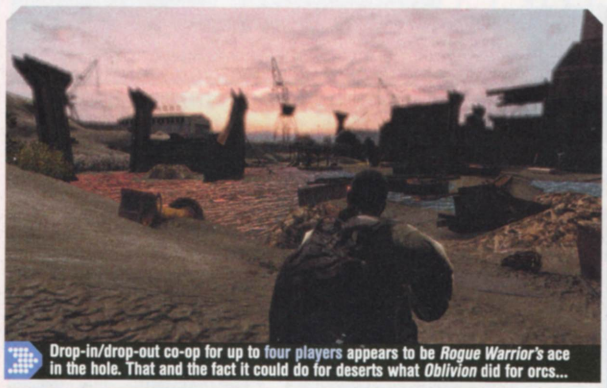
MOST WANTED RATING 5

Call us nutters, but we've got a *real* good feeling in our water about this one. Our only question marks linger over the rumours that the game is set for the episodic treatment. Please don't do it – we want it all!

ROGUE WARRIOR

■ OUT: TBC 2007 ■ DEV: BETHESDA ■ PUB: TBA PS3 360 PC

Oblivion meets tactical shooters...



Drop-in/drop-out co-op for up to four players appears to be *Rogue Warrior's* ace in the hole. That and the fact it could do for deserts what *Oblivion* did for orcs...

SNEAKY...

It's all a bit *Bravo Two Zero*, as you creep around the desert with your team knifing guards and avoiding capture...

A late entrant in the Best Water Effects Ever™ competition.

Truck go boom! Distracting guards is the way forward...

Bethesda really put themselves on the gaming map this year when *Oblivion* took the world by storm. Now, they've decided to try their hands at a gritty, realistic shooter set in volatile North Korea. Hmm, topical.

Rogue Warrior puts you in the shoes of badass Richard Marcinko and his elite SEALs. Stranded deep in enemy territory, they'll have to negotiate sprawling areas littered with crafty AI enemies. Sneaky booby-traps can be used to devastating effect, or you can go all gung-ho and storm emplacements Arnie-style. Plus four-player co-op! **Geraint**

MOST WANTED RATING 3

While we haven't seen enough yet to deliver anything apart from a tentative verdict, the fact that Bethesda's last game just happened to be the mighty *Oblivion* means this should rock the Communist bloc.

ARMY OF TWO

■ OUT: TBC 2007 ■ FORMATS: 360, PS3 ■ DEVELOPER: EA ■ PUBLISHER: EA
■ ONLINE: TBA ■ WEB: WWW.EA.COM/ARMYOFTWO/ ■ PLAYERS: TBC

Redefining the term 'blood brothers'...

We all knew next-gen was all about crowds (check out *Hitman: Blood Money* and *Dead Rising*); what we *didn't* realise is that it's also about dynamic duos. But whereas Batman and Robin fought for truth and justice, the likes of Kane and Lynch and Rios and Salem – the titular *Army of Two* – are anti-heroes rather than goodie two-shoes.

Packed off to Afghanistan on some classified op, this pair must work as a team in order to negotiate the hostile terrain. This'll involve barking orders to your AI partner through a headset or simply getting a mate to drop in and buddy up.

In a game where co-op is king and you live or die by your partner's abilities (or lack of them), *Army of Two* sets itself some lofty AI targets – but comes through with flying colours. The constant verbal sniping between Rios and Salem – although a bit too camp for our likings – is genuinely engaging, although you do sometimes wonder if two highly trained pros would be *quite* so argumentative in the midst of enemy territory...

Still, this is brave and welcome new territory for EA. We're all kinds of excited. **Rob**

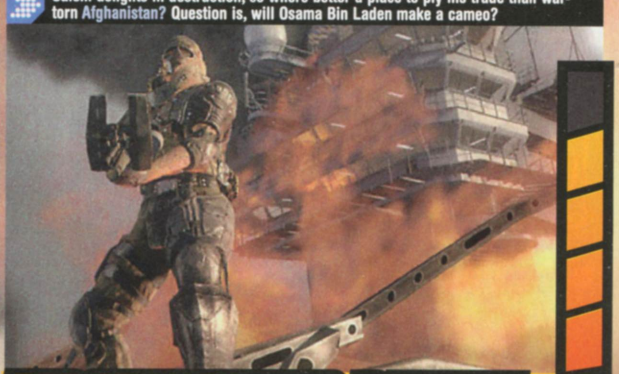
BONDED

Salem and Rios are totally inseparable, hardly surprising given they literally spend most of their lives watching one another's backs.

Your bro Salem is a bit of a loose canon – keep an eye on him!

Another warehouse full of explosive barrels? Tut, sloppy terrorists...

Do you go point or let you bro do it? Decisions, eh?



Salem delights in destruction, so where better a place to ply his trade than war-torn Afghanistan? Question is, will Osama Bin Laden make a cameo?

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Deserves a four for Salem's terrifying skull mask alone – the best headwear since the days of *Majora's Mask*. With freeform gameplay and an innovative weapon upgrade system this should be a major hit.

GENJI: DAYS OF THE BLADE

OUT: MARCH • DEV: GAME REPUBLIC • PUB SONY PS3

There's no arguing that this really looks the part, and we love the multi-character combo system – but from the opening parts that we've played, it's low on originality (it feels very current generation rather than next-generation) and, very strangely, the sound effects are particularly weedy-sounding. The later, enemy stuffed levels look far more promising though. **Kath**

From the lumbering hard-hitter, to a sprightly Ninja lass, each character offers something different.

MOST WANTED RATING 3

We never expected particularly great things from this – but at least it's looking solid and enjoyable enough. Not exactly what we expect from next-gen, though.

TUROK

OUT: 2007 • DEV: PROPAGANDA • PUB: BUENA VISTA PS3

There's no denying that the first two games on N64 were not just 10, but 11 shades of awesomeness – cutting edge for their time – but the series has since lost its way. It's up to a new developer now to try to put things right. From what we've seen – giant dinos, gut-ripping weapons and jungle action – it could well be on its way to redemption. Maybe. **Robin**

This looks to be a big departure from Turok's classic, Native American roots.

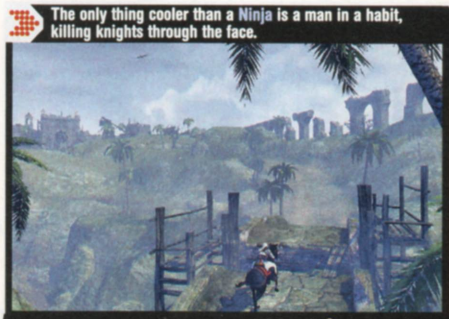
MOST WANTED RATING 3

We have to actually *play* this before we can psss judgement, or at least see it for an extended time. Thankfully, we've got just that next issue...

ASSASSIN'S CREED

OUT: 2007 • DEV: UBISOFT • PUB UBISOFT PS3 360

We would have gone all out on this – if only Ubisoft would actually tell us what's going on. One thing we do know, though, is that it's set to be one of the biggest games of next year – boasting massive crowds, the agility of a Ninja, and the stealth action of *Splinter Cell*. All in a lovely medieval wrapping. What's not to love? **Jes**



The only thing cooler than a Ninja is a man in a habit, killing knights through the face.

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Maybe it's the cowl, or the clockwork neck-jabbing dagger action, or slipping away unseen in a crowd of monks, but we want this *bad*.

OUT: MARCH • FORMAT: Wii • DEVELOPER: SEGA • PUBLISHER: SEGA • ONLINE: NO
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.SEGA.COM • PLAYERS: 1 (MULTI-PLAYER TBC)

SONIC™ and the Secret Rings

Sonic Wii action to die for!

Okay, let's see a show of hands for those of you who thought last month's *Sonic* was a bit rubbish – careful you don't drop your magazine now! Sonic still hasn't quite clicked with this whole 3D business has he? Which is why we think *Secret Rings* will help bring old Sonic back up to speed.

And we do mean 'old' Sonic – because this feels more like the classic 2D originals than any of the other 'adventure' style games that have gone before. Mainly due to a complete lack of freedom in your movement. It's basically on rails, see – tilting the remote moves Sonic left and right to dodge obstacles, and there's a button to jump, a flick to attack, and the D-pad to activate 'Break' moves – which allow you to boost to phenomenal speed, or slow down time, to squeeze under falling obstacles.

I works, very, *very* well – letting the game focus on the more important things, like spectacle and speed, which is what the original was really all about. Likewise, the control mechanism feels very natural, and only giving you a handful of control options really lets you soak in your gorgeous (for Wii, anyway) surroundings. Looking good, then. **Jes** GM

"THIS FEELS LIKE THE CLASSIC 2D ORIGINALS"

NEED TO KNOW

WHAT IS IT?

Sonic the Hedgehog in an old-school hell for leather race to the finish. You know, how it's supposed to be.

FACTS

- Sonic's first proper solo adventure since *Sonic CD* on the Mega CD
- 10 levels set in a more *Arabian Nights*-style setting
- Full use of the two Wii controllers – waggle and flick Sonic on to the finish line!

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Sonic the Hedgehog.....76%
Sonic Rivals.....79%

If you press 'a' to jump and then flick the controller forward Sonic will execute his classic spin attack – useful for extanded jumps and smashing enemy bots.

SHAKE IT!

The Wii Remote has really been taken advantage of, with all kinds of clever little techniques. You can flick it forward mid-jump to unleash a standard spin attack (flicking multiple times thereafter lets you bounce on enemies one after the other) while other uses are more ingenious...

Run into a catapult and then ease back before flicking forward.

The winged pots require you to shake the controller up and down.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES

- The simple controls
- The feeling of speed
- The lack of 'tude

GM HATES

- No sign of a multi-player mode
- The fear that Sega might mess it up

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Not since *Rush* have we felt that this is *Sonic* as it should be. Lightning fast, simple controls with no dodgy camera. Look forward to it like bangers and mash!

BOOST BALLS

Not only does Sonic have to collect the obligatory rings (for score and protection purposes), but there are now special glowing orbs to get your hands on...

There are plenty of these to speed through. They fill up a special meter.

...Which allows Sonic to perform *special moves*.

The Speed Break lets you escape from anything chasing you.

While slowing down time lets you narrowly escape hazards like this.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: Sonic Riders 61%
BIGGEST RIVAL:..... Sonic the Hedgehog, 76%
OUT SOONER:.....Sonic Rivals

KILLZONE

OUT: TBC 2007 • FROM: SONY PS3

We don't know much about *Killzone* on PS3 – what we do know is that it's already looking amazing on PS3. The demo so far has shown us the game looks likely to take place on the war-frenzied planet of Helghan and it's probably set after the first game. Expect more squad-based first-person blasting and, hopefully, even bigger multi-player maps. **Kath**

Bigger guns and vehicles make for an even more explosive game this time around.

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Killzone didn't quite manage to topple the mighty *Halo* with its FPS efforts on PS2. We're waiting to see if it can live up to its infamous E3 debut.

ENEMY TERRITORY: QUAKE WARS

OUT: SPRING 2007 • FROM: ACTIVISION PC

It deservedly won best multi-player game at this year's E3 with its 24 player full-on fragging. It's a humans vs Strogg online shooter with absolutely everything thrown in – weapons, vehicles and customisable characters. **Geraint**

Shoot, get binoculars out, check they've been reduced to a cloud of ashes and continue...

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Now that *Quake 4* is just a distant memory, we've got something else to look forward to. And with guns like the rapid-fire Lacerator we're looking forward to it.

FINAL FANTASY 13

OUT: TBC 2007 • FROM: SQUARE ENIX PS3

Exactly which characters will feature in this latest game we're yet to find out, but we do know the battle system seems to be in real-time, like the last couple of games. There's also a Gravity Bomb in action in the trailer, plus a type of slow motion effect which slows your enemies down to a crawl. Square are also planning an original *Final Fantasy* for every format! **Jes**

Forget turn-based battling – it's all action here. And looking lovely too.

MOST WANTED RATING 4

The PS3's first big RPG is looking very nice already. Expect another epic plot, new abilities and the usual Square loveliness.

GOD OF WAR 2

OUT: MARCH 14TH 2007 • FROM: SONY PS2

The god-bothering Kratos is back for a final outing on PS2 – and this is possibly going to be one of the last must-have games Sony release on the console. This sequel has new abilities that mean when you defeat a boss you take their magic weapons, like the Wind Bow and Fire Hammer. Then there's the flying which has been shown off a fair bit – Kratos can ride on the back of a Pegasus for winged combat. **Robin**

No one said it was family friendly. We're guessing the other guy started it though.

MOST WANTED RATING 5

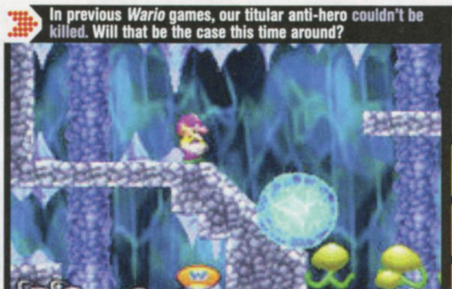
We've got no doubts this is going to be the god game to end all god games. And take the PS2 out with a bang, of course. Great stuff!

WARIO: THE THIEF

OUT: FEBRUARY 2007 (JAPAN) • FROM: NINTENDO DS

This looks like a platformer but there's much more to it than running and jumping. To progress and kill enemies you have to use each of Wario's four different guises – Thief, Space, Graffiti and Dinosaur. To change into each you doodle a shape on the screen – Space Wario can shoot lasers, Graffiti Wario can drawn doors and crates and so on. Genius! He may be a fat, boozer-nosed fool, but we love Wario. **Geraint**

In previous *Wario* games, our titular anti-hero couldn't be killed. Will that be the case this time around?



MOST WANTED RATING 3

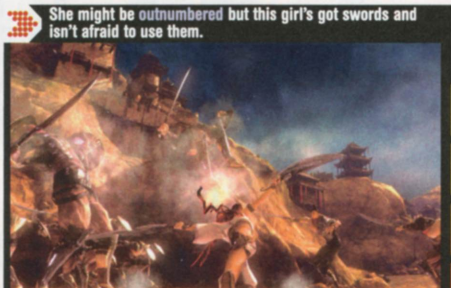
A unique concept combining doodling, platforming and puzzles. Looks like evil Wario might just out-do Mario with this one.

HEAVENLY SWORD

OUT: MARCH 2007 • FROM: SONY PS3

If you only had a few days left to live what would you do? Well, you could follow the example of the lead character and *Heavenly Sword* and go on a killing spree – against an evil king and his army, so for a good reason. You're armed with a chainlike weapon and also a pair of swords. But you can use these weapons in all sorts of new ways – like slinging enemies around the place with your chain. Nice. **Kath**

She might be outnumbered but this girl's got swords and isn't afraid to use them.



MOST WANTED RATING 4

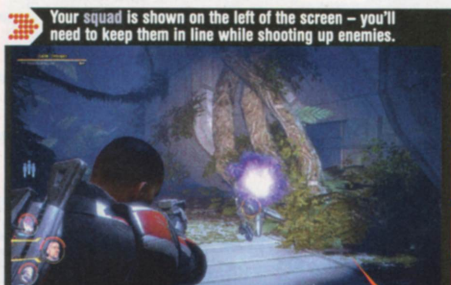
An adventure game right up there with *God Of War* but on PS3, so it looks even more beautiful. There's tons of combat too, against *whole armies*.

MASS EFFECT

OUT: TBC 2007 • FROM: MICROSOFT 360

BioWare have certainly been busy with *Mass Effect* – a huge sci-fi action RPG due out later this year. It's going to let you explore one planet after another, discover new alien civilisations and engage in a bit of full-on squad-based shooting. Your character is fully customisable too. Not just in terms of weapons and armour but talents and abilities too. **Rob**

Your squad is shown on the left of the screen – you'll need to keep them in line while shooting up enemies.



MOST WANTED RATING 5

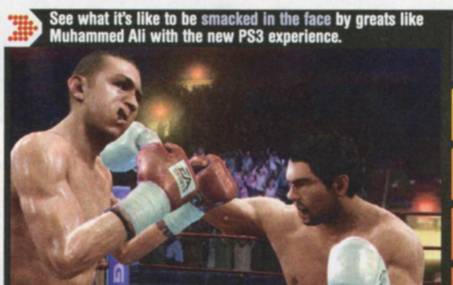
Massively detailed, atmospheric worlds to explore and entire alien races and side quests to uncover mean *Mass Effect* is a game we're gagging to see more of.

FIGHT NIGHT: ROUND 3

OUT: TBC 2007 • FROM: EA • FORMAT: PS3

We all stared at it open-mouthed when we saw it on Xbox 360. Now it's the PS3's turn to play host for possibly the most realistic sports game yet. Somehow, EA have managed to reproduce the boxers right down to the last pore and bead of sweat and it makes for an amazing looking game. The question is whether it'll look nicer than the 360 version. **Kath**

See what it's like to be smacked in the face by greats like Muhammed Ali with the new PS3 experience.



MOST WANTED RATING 4

It's time for PS3 owners to be wowed by the loveliness of this boxing sim. You'll never appreciate sweaty men as much as in this game.

NINJA GAIDEN SIGMA

OUT: TECMO • FROM: TBC 2007 • FORMAT: PS3

We were almost permanently scarred by the difficulty of Ninja Gaiden Black – now there's a whole new 'challenge' to look forward to. You're able to play as Rachel in *Sigma* so will witness events from her perspective, as well as see certain events which might have happened off camera in the first game. There are also brand new enemies. **Jes**

The first game was one of the toughest we've ever played. This looks like being *even harder*.

MOST WANTED RATING 3

We can't wait to see this lovely fighting game on PS3. New enemies and a dual wielding katana is enough to get us excited.

[PSP EXCLUSIVE]

Tomb Raider Anniversary

The original silicon chick returns!

2007 Special

The biggest games revealed and rated!

Including: Rainbow Six Vegas, Brothers in Arms: D-Day, Call of Duty: Roads to Victory, Elder Scrolls: Oblivion, Afterburner, The Warriors, Test Drive Unlimited, MGS: Portable Ops, and much, more!

Issue 28 On Sale Now!

180 REVIEWS INSIDE!

2 COMPLETE GTA GUIDES

• OUT: OCTOBER 16TH • FORMATS: PS3, XBOX 360 (PC NOT CONFIRMED BUT LIKELY) • DEVELOPER: ROCKSTAR NORTH
• PUBLISHER: ROCKSTAR GAMES • ONLINE: TBC • WEB: HTTP://WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/GRANDTHEFTAUTO4/

grand theft auto IV

A world of possibilities for Rockstar's world beater...

Rockstar's next instalment in their epic crime caper is undoubtedly the most highly anticipated game of 2007. And with competitors like *Halo 3* around, that's not bad going...

GTA helped PS2 win the console war in the west, and this enormous success means *GTA* plays a key role in the console war, as people will buy consoles just to play *GTA*. That's why Sony signed Rockstar up in a PS2 exclusive deal for previous games, and why Microsoft were so eager for a *GTA* to make it to the Xbox 360. Even Nintendo have been talking to Rockstar about possibilities for the Wii.

Get Rockstar's game on your machine and it guarantees more console sales.

THE FACTS

- The game is being released for the PS3 and Xbox 360 on October 16th 2007.
- Exclusive downloadable content will be made available on Xbox Live and on PS3, and will most likely take the form of new gameplay rather than just a few new cars.
- The game is being made using the RAGE engine which was used for *Rockstar Presents Table Tennis*.
- Lazlow Jones, the radio host and producer has been signed up to work on *GTA 4*.

Dave GM

"THE MOST ANTICIPATED GAME OF 2007"

WHAT WE THINK MIGHT HAPPEN

Of course, Grand Theft Auto 4 is shrouded in secrecy, and you can expect to see absolutely nothing on it until nearer the game's release next year (Rockstar don't want anyone nicking any ideas, do they?). Until then, here are some of our more educated guesses and speculation as to what you can expect in the game...

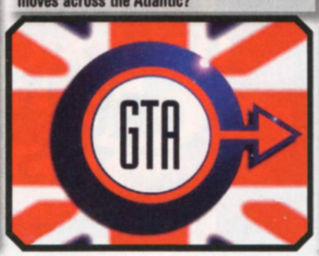
ONLINE

Rockstar have being employing personnel with experience in network gaming which suggests that *GTA4* will have an online element. This could mean that Rockstar are creating a MMORPG where gamers will be able to create gangs and go on crime sprees together.

However, this might be a leap too far from previous *GTAs* so the online content could just be a similar to the multi-player options seen on the PSP. Or the co-operative gameplay seen in *San Andreas's* two player mini-game could be expanded, requiring gamers to form gangs to complete side missions.

TRANS-CONTINENTAL

Being set in one city might be seen as something of a step back after the state-sized challenge of San Andreas, so Rockstar may attempt to spread further afield. If you're looking for a country-wide game the UK fits the bill in terms of size, but probably not in terms of universal popularity. We doubt that *Liberty* or *Vice City* will show as they've already been thoroughly explored in several games, while a return to *San Andreas* would be too soon. But what about an adventure that starts stateside and then moves across the Atlantic?



SPANNING THE DECADES

Part of the success of *Vice City* and *San Andreas* was due to the nostalgia generated by the period-specific content. Subsequently, we doubt that they will travel back in time further than 1980 as a game set in the seventies or earlier would only appeal to gamers in their forties – not Rockstar's target audience. That leaves only three decades to set the action in, so why not a game that spans all three?

EMPIRE BUILDING

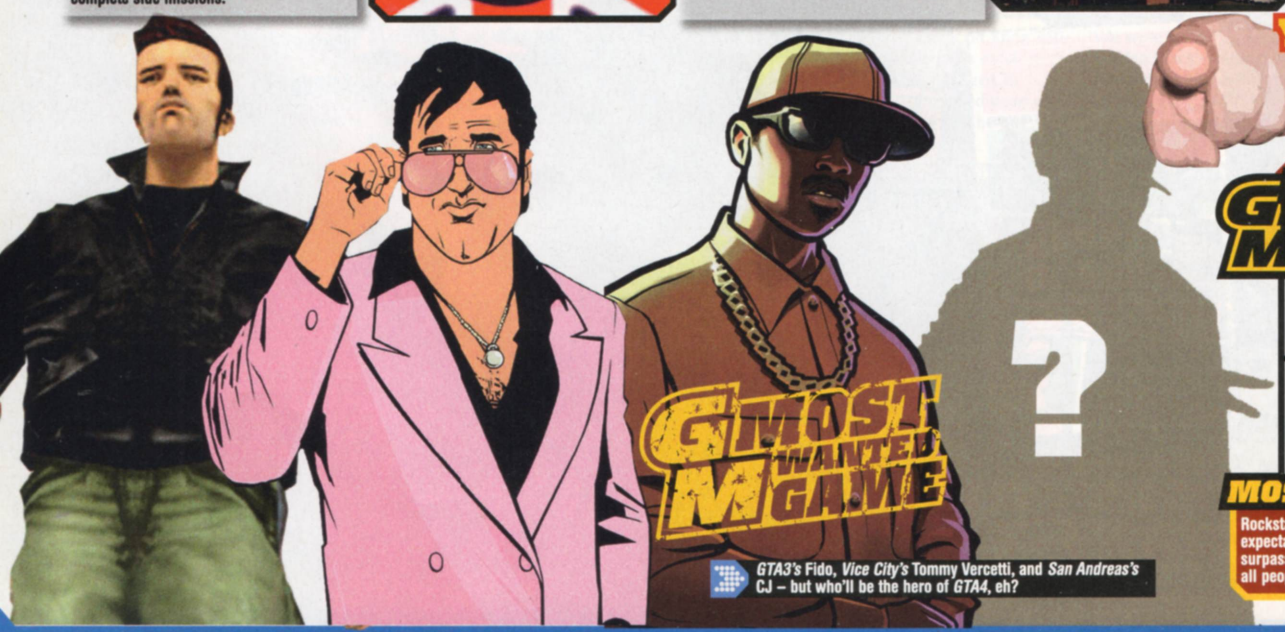
Owning property and businesses has been part of *GTA* ever since *Vice City*, but has yet to become a vital part of the game. This might change with *GTA4* which could expand on the empire building seen in *Vice City Stories*, allowing the gamer to choose their own path through the game without being dependent on the plot missions. It was a very simple process in *VCS*, so the running of it could be made more sophisticated, such as recruiting staff and improving security.

MULTIPLE CHARACTERS

GTA has always followed the story of just the one man, but the fact that there will downloadable episodic content has got us thinking: rather than being parts of the main plot these could be side stories for other characters. So it would be the equivalent of *Liberty City Stories* to *GTA3*, as we got to see how Toni Cipriani became such a psycho. Otherwise it would be a bit tight on gamers without broadband to not to get any conclusion from the single-

YOUR SHOUT!

What do you want to see in the new GTA? Send your suggestions to: GTA Phwoar!, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, or email 'em to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk.



GTA3's Fido, *Vice City's* Tommy Vercetti, and *San Andreas's* CJ – but who'll be the hero of *GTA4*, eh?

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Thinking of all the possibilities!
+ Knowing Rockstar will deliver

GM HATES
– Exclusive content for one console – many will miss out
– The waiting...

MOST WANTED RATING

Rockstar have managed to not only match expectations for every new *GTA*, but to surpass them. Can *GTA4* be all things to all people? We sincerely hope so.

5

OUT: LATE 2007 • DEVELOPER: CAPCOM • PUBLISHER: CAPCOM • ONLINE: TBA • FORMATS: PS3 AND XBOX 360
WEB: WWW.CAPCOM.COM • PLAYERS: 1

RESIDENT EVIL 5

Back to Umbrella or shooting more Spaniards?

Resident Evil 4 breathed much-needed life into Capcom's survival horror series, so much so that number five sequel is right at the top of many people's most wanted list for 2007. Just one look at *Lost Planet* shows what Capcom can do with the next-gen machines so we're expecting big, incredible and scary things from *Resi 5*.

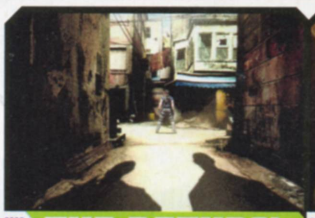
(We must mention *Umbrella Chronicles*, however, which is in development for the Wii and supposedly links the main *Resi* plotline with the events of *Resi 4*. Ooh, exciting!)

THE FACTS

- It won't star Leon and from the few screenshots released so far it seems Chris Redfield will be making a return.
- According to producer Jun Takeuchi it will use the same gameplay as *Resident Evil 4*, so that means more superb blasting action.
- The game is set in a location with a very hot climate, which could be Africa or the Middle East. *Resi's* never been there! **Dave** GM

GM MOST WANTED GAME

WHAT WE THINK MIGHT HAPPEN



THE RETURN OF WESKER

Arch villain Albert Wesker was knocking around behind the scenes in *Resi 4* but with Chris Redfield potentially back, expect Wesker to be right in the middle of things. This is because Wesker hates Chris and will take great pleasure in kicking his head in, just like in *Code: Veronica*.

BACK TO UMBRELLA

After Resi's sojourn in Spain in *Resident Evil 4*, we expect the focus to come back to Umbrella or the remnants of it. It's rumoured that there will be BIG plot developments in *Resi 5*, so it has to be about the T-Virus or the shadowy, mysterious company that started all this.

FASTER ZOMBIES

That's right, zombies. We expect the zombie to be back but with some of the qualities of the Ganados from *Resi 4* such as being able to communicate with each other and attacking strategically. Capcom have also said that the *Dawn of the Dead* remake is a heavy influence...

ONLINE PLAY

***Resident Evil 5* is likely to have online play which could be co-operative (how good would that be? Pretty darn amazing!) but we expect it to be used in a challenge-based extra, such as a mini-game along the lines of *Resident Evil 4's* Mercenaries.**

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES

+ The retention of action heavy gameplay
+ A return to the original plot

GM HATES

- It won't be using the wonderful GameCube controls
- Possible 2008 release!

MOST WANTED RATING

If it follows the *Resi 4* template, it'll be amazing. But throw in possible online fun, a more arid, foreign setting and faster zombies, and you've got sheer brilliance.

5

THE BEST OF THE REST

Most wanted but highly mysterious!

JAMES BOND

Activision now have the Bond license but couldn't release a *Casino Royale* game as the agreement doesn't start till next September. They could well be looking to develop something for the next film, so we might have to wait till 2008.

SPIDER-MAN 3

Similar gameplay dynamics to *2* but with a far more detailed New York City and some devilish new bosses such as Venom, Sandman and Harry Osbourne. Also there will be chance to be Spidey in the black suit!

FIFA 2008

A key year for *FIFA*. Can EA build on the success of 2007? Or will they start tweaking and maybe ruining what's a very good arcade game? A good port to the next-gen console is what we can hope for.

PES 7

We await with bated breath to see what Seabass can do with the PS3. Expect amazing animation, an online Master League and hopefully some better licensing news. Fingers crossed.

BURNOUT 5

A completely fresh start for the Criterion series, with open world racing similar to *Test Drive Unlimited*. Expect the action to be just as intense and a new emphasis on online play.

STAR WARS

A next-gen *Star Wars* game is definitely in development and a Jedi-toying-with-some-Imperial-troops demo was shown at E3. However it isn't clear which platform this will appear on or what story it will follow. Then there's speculation that a game that allows you to use the Wii remote as a lightsabre is in production.

WWE: SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008

We're still waiting to see what Yuke's do with the PlayStation 3. They've shown they can do photo-realism, now we're hoping they do something special with the online options. And what about the Wii?

TRANSFORMERS: THE MOVIE

Atari made a fantastic PS2 *Transformers* game, but Activison have the rights to produce a game based on the Speilberg-produced film out next summer. Spielberg loves his games so he'll want this to be just right.

STUNTMAN 2

Follow up to the Atari's Hollywood driving sim. Expect ace-looking cars being sent over cunningly laid-out ramps and ending up in a beautiful-looking crumpled mess.

THE GETAWAY 3

Sony's London-based crime caper might be taking a jaunt across the Channel to Amsterdam for the third in the series. It will mix photo-realistic graphics with gritty violence and a mature storyline.

TEKKEN 6

Namco's scrapper will eventually turn up on the PS3, but probably after a stint in the arcades. *Virtua Fighter 5* will already be out by then, so it will face significant competition – it will have to offer something different to *VF's* super-slick simulation.

THE SIMPSONS MOVIE

EA now hold the license for *The Simpsons* and so will not miss out on launching a game to tie in with big screen debut of Springfield's finest. No doubt it will be cel-shaded and multi-platform.

LEGO BATMAN

Lego Star Wars developers Traveller's Tales are now moving their attention to the Dark Knight. With a whole universe of enemies and allies to use this will have all the fanboy appeal of the *Star Wars* games. Perhaps an online co-op mode as well?

BATMAN and all related characters, names, and indicia are trademarks of DC Comics (C) 2001.

JUST CAUSE 2

The Avalanche Studios open-world game has been a significant critical and commercial success. Also there's are plenty more adventures and political situations hero Rico Rodriguez could get involved with. We'd certainly like to see a sequel.

MARVEL UNIVERSE ONLINE

Hugely ambitious MMORPG based on the Marvel universe that's being made by *City of Heroes* developers Cryptic Studios. It's going to include events from Marvel's 60-year history. *Secret Wars*, anyone?

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 4

More motoring excellence from Bizarre Creations that will concentrate on maintaining the interest of the large online community of racers, while setting new standards in graphics and performance.

DEAD OR ALIVE: CODE CHRONOS

A prequel to the *Dead or Alive* series which relates the story of Ayane and Kasumi before the very first tournament. This means it won't be a straight fighting game and we hope it'll be load better than the *Tekken* spin-off, *Death by Degrees*.

PS3

GM MOST WANTED GAME

OUT: LATE 2007 ■ **FORMAT:** PS3 ■ **DEVELOPER:** KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS
■ **PUBLISHER:** KONAMI ■ **ONLINE:** TBC ■ **WEB:** HTTP://WWW.KONAMI.JP/KOJIMA_PRO ■ **PLAYERS:** TBC

METAL GEAR SOLID® 4

New young Snake, same old charm!

In *MGS4*, everything has a double meaning. Is Snake old – as he's looked in all the screenshots to date? Or young – in line with the teasing glimpse of his 'traditional' cigarette-smoking self at the end of the latest trailer? With Hideo Kojima casting doubt over the identity of his leading man, it's a true case of Snake shedding his skin.

"FPS shooting is a trend and I really want to give players that freedom this time", reveals producer Hideo Kojima. Contrary to the series' stealth-based roots, Snake will be free to achieve his goals through any means – sneaking past with minimal conflict, or tackling foes head on. It's not even clear *who* Snake will be fighting, with the player free to make, or break, allegiances with warring factions as the situation sees fit.

The raging battlefield might be a tough place to hide but Snake can evade detection *anywhere* using his new OctoCam suit. It's based on the real life abilities of an Octopus, allowing Snake to change his colour and texture to mimic the background and fool enemies. The emphasis is on how you move, and not where you're hiding, in order to deceive people – for example, in the trailer Snake shuffles on his back through an open trench, evading foes before lobbing a surprise grenade over his shoulder.

Snake will still use the scenery, mind – in one scene, he hides in a barrel and rolls into a bunch of guards, splitting them like skittles. He also has a new range of grapple moves, allowing you to break bones, crush windpipes and interrogate foes for information.

Is Snake really an old man? The answer would appear to be yes – but only some of the time. The serum he injects, to relieve the effects of the FOXDIE virus (implanted in *MGS*), might be responsible for his youthful look, with his body ageing as time goes by. This would explain the game's 'Nowhere to Hide' tag, since Snake is constantly on the run from age itself. Fancy that!

On the other hand, 'youthful' Snake could be a new clone altogether, separate from 'old' Snake. Or – get this – Snake's entire face could be camouflage, since his OctoCam suit has a ninja-style mask. Double meanings? Pah. *Metal Gear Solid 4* is so complex, there's only one thing we know for sure – given Kojima's reputation, it's going to be the best game on PS3.

Dan Dawkins

GM

NEED TO KNOW

WHAT IS IT?

Metal Gear Solid's PS3 debut, which ties up the loose ends after *MGS2*.

FACTS

- The theme is 'Nowhere to Hide', with the action set in active battle a few years from now
- Simple, 'more direct controls' than *MGS3*, plus SixAxis tilt functions to be confirmed

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Metal Gear Solid 3..... 95%
ZOE2..... 78%

"SNAKE IS ON THE RUN FROM OLD AGE"

UPDATE! NEW SHOTS AND INFO ON METAL GEAR SOLID 4!

HOW IT PLAYS

Outside of Kojima's shiny office, nobody knows – but he has confirmed the playable game actually exists. The basic control system is finished, and it's possible to play about with the AI, camera and basic combat. It's interesting to note the lack of on-screen bars and menus, with all Snake's vital info related via his Solid Eye System eye patch, which takes the place of his binoculars/heat vision etc. Kojima has confirmed that you'll get to control the Mk.II. robot (seen in a previous trailer displaying Otacon's face) possibly via PSP link up as previously hinted, but has denied you'll get to play as Raiden – or rather, the beefed-up new robot Ninja Raiden seen slicing apart multiple GEKKOS in a previous trailer. Other returning characters include speccy Metal Gear expert Otacon, the trusty Colonel Campbell, and Naomi Hunter.

OCTOCAM IN ACTION

No, they haven't wallpapered over a dead body, that's Snake using his camouflage to (almost) seamlessly blend into the wall. We're not sure exactly how it works – i.e. whether you can always leave it on – but Kojima suggests it'll take a few seconds to achieve 100% invisibility, limiting its use.

HOW TO BEAT A GEKKO

The new Metal Gears, the GEKKO, are a chilling blend of organic agility, and robotic strength, with less compassion for human life than a broken toaster has for sliced bread.

They're most vulnerable around the fleshy bits, and the dome shaped control turrets on their heads.

WE LOVE!

Robo-Raiden mercilessly cutting up a pack of GEKKOS, or poor Old Snake huffing and puffing to take out *one* GEKKO, but surviving thanks to a cunning use of OctoCam, sheer firepower and guile. It's no mean feat, given that a pack of GEKKOS killed about 20 PMCs (Private Military Contractors) in about one minute during a previous trailer.

Note Snake's new back shuffle/shoot move – a great way to tackle foes while scrambling for cover, or using the OctoCam ability.

SOLID EYE SYSTEM: ACTIVE

Once again, look close and you'll see Snake's eye patch is flashing while he fires, perhaps indicating that he is using one of the complex vision modes to zoom in and aim. The Solid Eye System's full capabilities aren't known yet, mind...

SHOCK AND AWWW...

Isn't he cute? That's the Mk.II. robot, who you'll be able to control to sneak up and shock guards, or – we presume – scout ahead in tricky situations, with info relayed to the Solid Eye System.

POTENTIAL PROBLEMS?

The biggest problem with *MGS3* is that it was too slow initially, and the controls were fiddly – factors that Kojima promises to fix for *MGS4*. The plot's also hideously complex, but to be honest, we'd rather play a game that makes you think or – heaven forbid – do a bit of research, rather than the same old twaddle like, say, fighting alien gangsters from Thorgaz who killed our brother(s) and want to take over the world.

FACE OFF!

Kojima has confirmed he'll be digitally mapping real peoples' faces, and motions, into the game, saying they'll play a key role, but won't explain why. The smart bet is that you'll be able to scan your face into the game for online play.

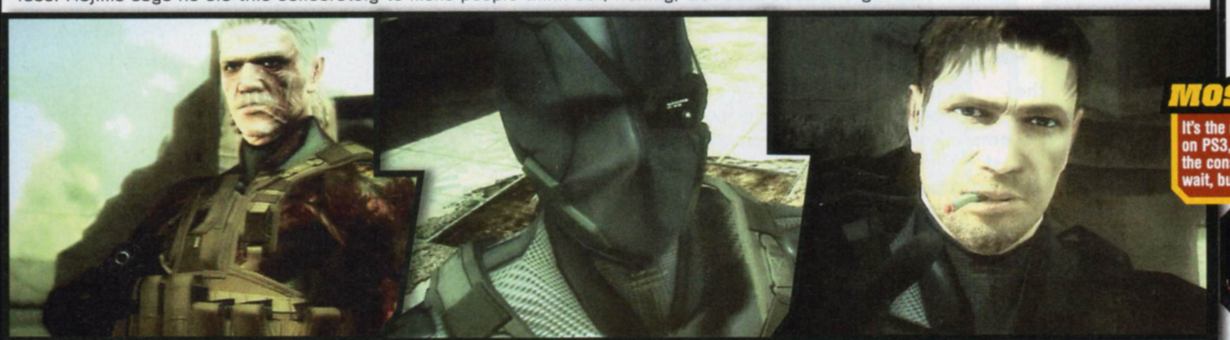
At the recent TGS show, Koj explained it all with a lovely lady.

PIMP MY SNAKE

Look closely at Snake's OctoCam suit, and you can see the words 'Elbow Protection Shock Plate Here', suggesting you'll be able to upgrade the suit as you progress. Kojima has already confirmed you'll be able to do the same with weapons, but we're not sure whether you'll have to find, or buy, upgrades.

MEET YOUNG SNAKE

In the final scene of the Tokyo Game Show trailer, 'Snake' – or whoever he is – peels back the Ninja-style mask to reveal his young face. Kojima says he did this deliberately to make people think but, frankly, we're too scared to guess.



GM VERDICT

GM LOVES

+ The complex plot, lush visuals and brutal, amoral, feel. And we're hot for Old Snake's 'tache.

GM HATES

- Having to explain the complex plot, and worrying that we'll have to play as Young Snake.

MOST WANTED RATING 5

It's the most anticipated exclusive game on PS3, and might be worth the price of the console alone. Kojima might make us wait, but he's *never* let us down.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: Metal Gear Solid 3
BIGGEST RIVAL: Splinter Cell: Double Agent, 86%
OUT SOONER:..Mercenaries 2

Here we have Outland, accessed via the Dark Portal, and seen here from the back of one of the splendid new flying mounts.

■ OUT: JANUARY 07 ■ DEV: BLIZZARD ■ PUB: SEGA PC

WORLD OF WARCRAFT: THE BURNING CRUSADE

Unlikely to be extinguished...

OUTPOURING

The two new races will each receive new starting areas in existing land Azeroth...

The Blood Elves hunger for magic and have sinisterly glowy eyes.

The Draenei, meanwhile, have glowy skin, but hearts of sincerest gold.

The important thing here is that the Sword of a Thousand Truths, from the recent famous *South Park* episode, will be one of the new items.

Elsewhere, there's, well, there's more of everything. A new level cap of 70, for instance, and two new races, and the entire new continent of Outland, complete with flying mounts (which, in turn, lead to the discovery of some special squirrelled-away areas). And more still. There's very little chance of this disappointing *WoW* fans when it falls into their grasping paws... **Rob**

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Nothing to interest the unconverted, of course, but for those of us whose minds belong to the dwarves and the orcs, this is likely to provide countless hours of entertainment.

■ OUT: TBA 07 ■ DEVELOPER: LEVEL-5 ■ PUBLISHER: SONY ■ ONLINE: NO ■ WEB: WWW.JP.PLAYSTATION.COM/SCEJ/TITLE/SHIROKISHI/ PLAYERS: 1 PS3

WHITE KNIGHT STORY

White Knight to White Rook. Do you copy?

Fresh from the critical acclamations of star-sailing PS2 adventure *Rogue Galaxy*, Level-5 are busy creating another brand new, non-franchise game. And, interestingly, it's looking like a sort of fusion of European fantasy with well-worn anime concepts – a classy, classical setting swathed in exotic imagination.

The lead character Lenard can transform into the titular White Knight, a seven-metre-tall being of immense power, and the game's likely to make scale its main theme, with some major enemies exceeding 2,000 metres in size. Don't be fooled into expecting something entirely akin to *Shadow of the Colossus*, though, as menus do play a role in the gameplay – but, it seems, only to add depth to some exciting actiony combat, in the style of the *Star Ocean* series.

The animation is looking genuinely amazing, with battles actually *feeling* like battles as opposed to stilted representations. And, as befits something so fascinated with size, this is apparently a good 50-60 hours long... **Adam**

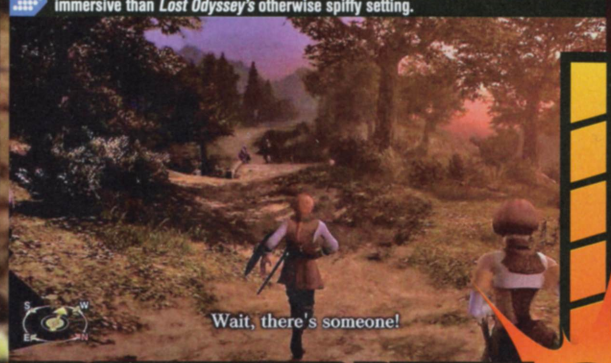
ATTACK!

Before battle, you can arrange a 'function palette' of moves for easy access. Battles were never so fun!

Here, the bearded bloke launches easily into a spectacular combo.

And here, Lenard grabs one of the soldiers so the lass can kick him.

Lastly, here's the mighty White Knight itself.



Thanks to its truly wondrous graphics, *WKS*'s world is already looking a lot more immersive than *Lost Odyssey*'s otherwise spiffy setting.

MOST WANTED RATING 5

Level-5 have real ambition, and this could easily be a masterpiece – sort of the *Power Rangers* of fantasy RPGs, except, y'know, good. We'll be keeping our metre-long fingers crossed.

FINE TIME

Among the new ideas: a master dungeon you can only make limited progress in each time, and a multi-player mode in which one player directs three Darknuts, trying to reach the other player's Link before he returns a flag.

Hopefully the overworld will be as complicated as the original *Zelda*'s.

The addition of invincible pursuey enemies ought to up tension.

■ OUT: TBA 2007 ■ DEVELOPER: NINTENDO ■ PUBLISHER: NINTENDO ■ ONLINE: TBC ■ WEB: WWW.NINTENDO.COM ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 DS

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: PHANTOM HOURGLASS

Our phantom eggs are cooked...

The days of the button-pressing *Zeldas* are, it seems, a thing of the past.

Now, Link follows a stylus-controlled fairy and you tap on enemies to have Link attack. Whether or not this'll be as long-termly satisfying as skilfully weaving in with a D-Pad is unknown – there will, however, be plenty of other ingenious bits and pieces to liven it up, such as the famous use of the boomerang by drawing a line on the screen to describe its route.

And it's all looking pleasingly *Zelda* like, right down to the birds on the overworld that flap from trees. Aaah. **Adam**

This boss battle with a cyclone-riding squid is one of the standout moments.

MOST WANTED RATING 4

Worst case scenario: a loose action game with the stylus obscuring your view constantly. Best case: a deep adventure with brilliantly implemented quirks. More likely the latter.

A return to the days when dress-wearing dogs could sell their cakes and axes and no one would bat an eyelid. The next generation needs more of this sort of thing.

■ OUT: TBC 2007 ■ FROM: MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS 360

BLUE DRAGON

We're quite cheerful, ourselves...

The first shell to be fired from developer Mistwalker's courageously aimed cannon, this could well be the game that gets Japan behind the Xbox 360.

Blue Dragon uses one of (legendary SNES RPG) *Chrono Trigger's* best ideas – enemies are visible in the overworld before turn-based fights are initiated. You do get taken to a separate arena for the fights, though it expands on the overworld bits a good deal, with you tossing bombs to paralyse enemies and raising shields to smash through lower-levelled foes. We wouldn't mind seeing other games adopt this system, which really lends a cohesive feel to the world – it's simply much, much better than the disorientatingly abstract random encounters RPG fans are usually forced to tromp through.

Meanwhile, there look to be plenty of cunning twists in the battles, with some enemy characters that may take a disliking to one another and temporarily side with you to their advantage. Exciting, no? **Robin**

DIVERSE!

The actual game looks to be as colourful as the graphics, with a good amount of mini-games and side-bits planned.

Aha! An on-rails shooting sequence against a deliciously designed craft.

2D pastel-coloured beings living on the surface of a wall! Brilliant!

MOST WANTED RATING 4

A blast of sunny, SNESy RPG colour, seen through the eyes of the 360's industrial PowerSpectacles. With a girl named Kluke. With any luck, we'll have something to remember, here.

■ OUT: TBC 2007 ■ FROM: MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS 360

LOST ODYSSEY

Or '*Final Fdyssey*', if you will...

For sheer scope, *Lost Odyssey* simply can't be beaten, and it's all thanks to the timescale of the plot. Link warped seven years into the future in *Ocarina of Time*, and *Dragon Quest 5's* story spanned the lifetime of the hero, but *LO's* Kaim is a man cursed to live 1,000 years. And, daringly, we're going to be following him the whole way.

We're quietly hoping the actual gameplay will live up to the hype – the fantastically choreographed opening cutscene, in which Kaim cleaves his way through a wonderfully realised battlefield in one flowing take, transitions jarringly into a series of comparatively clunky turn-based battles. But, at the very least, the story's likely to draw you in, tuned more to the personal, day-to-day side of things as multiple generations stretch by (with, inevitably, splashes of the grandiose here and there). And the unique background has thrown up some equally unique twists: four of your party members can die for good, affecting the plot and giving you the opportunity to absorb their powers as a useful sort of memento. Hugely promising stuff, then – and a proper *FF* rival. **Kath**

"The tears of a man who cannot die," said the trailer. "The anger of a man having to fight small mushroom people after an exceptional intro sequence," we add.

MOST WANTED RATING 4

A disenchanted near-immortal set adrift in an immaculately conceived world: this is a fantastic premise. There is a danger, however, of the gameplay being a bit *too* traditional.

OBLIVION PSP

■ OUT: 2007 ■ DEV: BETHESDA ■ PUB: UBISOFT PSP

Oblivion's portable incarnation does away with the vast and epic free-roaming landscapes of the original in favour of some PSP-friendly dungeon-adventuring. Don't sniff too prominently at its limitations, however, as we're likely to be getting some good original content, here, held together with a hopefully workable *Metroid Prime*-inspired control scheme. **Robin**

"You hold a sword well, my friend. Whereas I – ha ha! – I hold it at an angle! Rarrgh!"

MOST WANTED RATING 3

The controls, in particular, still need to prove themselves, and definite concessions have had to have been made, but the appeal of of this is intact.

LOTR: THE WHITE COUNCIL

■ OUT: 2007 ■ DEV: EA ■ PUB: EA 360 PS3 PC

Appropriately nestled 'tween those two *Oblivions*, this is a free-roaming RPG set 80-ish years before the start of the rather popular film series based on books you may have heard of. The team at EA are undertaking the rather risky business of adding stuff to the *Lord of the Rings* lore, but they're all massive fans, so it ought to be all right. **Jes**

We couldn't find any shots, so we thought we'd use a picture of the *GM* offices instead.

MOST WANTED RATING 3

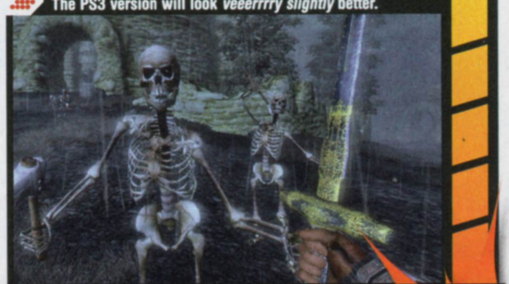
If they whip a nice gameplay system out of the hat, there's promise here. With those *Oblivions* doing the rounds, though, they've got to try hard.

OBLIVION PS3

■ OUT: 2007 ■ DEV: BETHESDA ■ PUB: : UBISOFT PS3

The PS3 *Oblivion*, meanwhile, is the full, life-eating bundle of exuberant questiness we've known and loved on the PC – with more! A new faction called the Knights of the Nine (also available now for PC and 360), in fact, hewn from pure, gleaming goodness to counterbalance the original's predeliction for best rewarding those on the Dark Side. **Adam**

These upset skeletons brought to you courtesy of the 360. The PS3 version will look *veeerrrry slightly* better.



MOST WANTED RATING 5

It's *Oblivion*, and it's on the PS3. What's not to buzzingly anticipate via the power of a great big number five? This'll be *lovely*.

PC XBOX 360 PS3

STRANGLEHOLD

OUT: MARCH **PUB:** MIDWAY PC 360 PS3

This is a next-gen shooter that fires from both hips and plays like a gunslinger's dream. This melding of John Woo and *Max Payne* is crammed with subtle interactive crannies and *totally destructible* environments. Best of all, though, are the bullet time sequences and the way your balletic bloodletting earns you style points. Sick but oh-so-satisfying... **Rob**

Ogle the pretty corona our gun creates in the rain as we pump a whole magazine of bullets into that guard.

MOST WANTED RATING 5

The 'John Woo' billing could easily have been a throwaway gimmick, but this is a superbly cinematic and bloody entertaining shooter. Get the Tequila in!

BROTHERS IN ARMS: HELL'S HIGHWAY

OUT: 2007 **PUB:** UBISOFT PC 360 PS3

BiA has captured our hearts with a winning combination of pathos and strategy in amongst the Bosch-bashing mayhem. This time round it's Operation Market-Garden mayhem for Baker, Hartsock and the rest of the 101st Airborne... **Rob**

We say that *Brothers in Arms* should be compulsory playing in school history lessons...

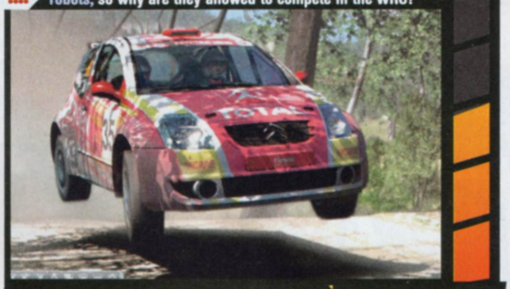
MOST WANTED RATING 3

More of the same ultra slick, squad-based FPS action but those graphics have come on a mite since *Earned in Blood*. Should give *COD3* a run for its money...

COLIN MCRAE: DIRT

OUT: 2007 **PUB:** CODEMASTERS PC 360 PS3

Colin McRae has been coaxed out of retirement to challenge cheeky young off-road upstarts like PS3's *MotorStorm*. But whereas that game is all about OTT crashes and jumps, Codemasters aim to nail the terrifying, edge-of-the-seat thrills and utter realism of the WRC circuit. **Geraint**



We all know Citroëns can transform into big ice-skating robots, so why are they allowed to compete in the WRC?

MOST WANTED RATING 3

12 car classes and real-time damage are just the start; we reckon this is the racer that'll put Codemasters back on the racing map.

Argh! These new Combine grunts looks like a mix between a Stormtrooper and a Big Daddy from *Bioshock*. Best shoot them in the corrugated bits...

OUT: SUMMER 2007 **DEV:** VALVE **PUB:** EA PC 360

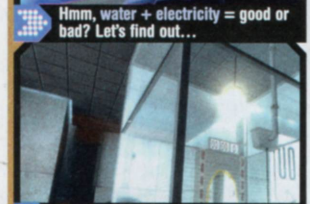
HALF-LIFE 2: EPISODE TWO

Four-eyes good, aliens bad...

POOR-TAL

During X06 we made *fools* of ourselves struggling with the puzzles in *Portal* in front of industry luminaries. D'oh!

Hmm, water + electricity = good or bad? Let's find out...



Puzzles involving lavatories *rock*. According to Jes.

It may have been pushed back to the summer (boo!) but we're still in full-on salivation mode for the next instalment in Valve's work of PC genius. With revamped physics, a noticeable graphical overhaul, some bitchin' new weapons and new environs well away from the drudge of City 17 this promises to be a breath of fresh FPS air.

Even better, it'll also come with the ace-looking *Portal* – which promises to redefine the limits of puzzle action. Also: Valve reckons the Xbox 360 version of *HL2*, all spruced up with swanky lighting, and will run at super-smooth speed – yay, yay and thrice yay! **Robin**

MOST WANTED RATING 5

Forget *Episode One*, as good as it was; this is the real deal, filled with the next-generation effects and the action-packed storytelling that Valve have become famous for. Go Gordon Freeman!

OUT: 2007 **DEVELOPER:** EA BLACK BOX **PUBLISHER:** EA **ONLINE:** TBA
WEB: WWW.EA.COM 360 PS3

SKATE

Are EA skating on thin ice?

After a couple of years languishing underground in the doldrums, The Birdman really pulled out all the stops this year on Xbox 360 to wow *GM* with *Project 8*. A blistering return to form then, but don't rest on your laurels, Tony, because EA is coming to get you!

SKATE (oh *do* stop shouting EA) is planning to really work the realistic, physics-based angle of skating – EA reckons that thanks to the power of the next-gen consoles (and dual analogue controls) no two tricks will ever be the same. The thrill of landing particularly hardcore moves'll be complemented by the super cinematic camera system, which'll ensure gameplay looks like a bona fide skating vid. Gnarly, dude!

Ever-conscious of packing their games with star quality, *SKATE* is likely to feature, amongst others, Chris Cole, Danny Way and PJ Ladd. That's some roster, and knowing EA's flair for presentation, *Project 8* is likely to be walloped in the graphical stakes with some amazing recreations of famous urban 'boarding hangouts. In fact, some of the screens to your left look proper next-gen amazing, right down to the grips on the bottom of a boarder's pair of Vans.

So prepare yourself for all the tricks and chicks you can handle without the misery of an afternoon spent down your local Accident and Emergency room with a broken wrist... *SKATE* is set to be one of the biggest hits of 2007 – could it be *Tony Hawk's* RIP? **Geraint**

BOARD STOOPID

By focusing on authentic skaters and locations, *SKATE* is trying to lure gamers away from the OTT moves and environs of the Hawkster...

All the screens so far hint at primarily urban locations...

You'll be able to tweak your boarder to kingdom come.

Decks have been designed by pros.

Visually, *SKATE* looks as if it's going to run *Project 8* right off the road and into a ditch. We can't wait to rack up the ASBOs with some mad city races!

MOST WANTED RATING 4

SSX on a skateboard? Well, perhaps not – but if EA can ally the tricked-out zaniness of their superb snowboarding series with this surprisingly mature graphical style they could be onto yet another winner...

World's best gaming processor claim based on 3DMark*2006 – CPU test results as performed by Intel Corporation, July 2006. Actual performance may vary. See www.intel.com/performance for more information. *2006 Intel Corporation. Intel, the Intel logo, Intel Core, the Intel Core logo, Intel. Leap ahead., and the Intel. Leap ahead. logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. All rights reserved.

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BLOWOUT

46 GAMES OF NEXTER-YEAR ALL STUFFED INTO YOUR BLEEDING EYES!

BANJO KAZOOIE
360
• FROM: RARE • OUT: TBC

Classic N64 bird and bear platformer returns on Xbox 360! **4**

ALONE IN THE DARK
360 PC
■ FROM: ATARI ■ OUT: TBC

Forget *Resident Evil, this* is the original Survival Horror. now in Next-Gen-O-vision. **4**

HUXLEY
PC 360
■ FROM: WEBZEN ■ OUT: TBC

A massively multi-player shooter - allowing 5,000 players to take part! **3**

HELLBOY
PSP 360 PS3
• FROM: KONAMI • OUT: TBC

Time-hopping action with the demon. Big on destructible environments apparently. **3**

CODED ARMS: ASSAULT
PS3
■ FROM: KONAMI ■ OUT: MARCH 2007

Neon-drenched FPS from Konami - unfortunately, it's a bit average. **2**

MONSTER MADNESS
360
■ FROM: SOUTHPEAK ■ OUT: FEBRUARY

Cartoony, zombie hoard smasher, that plays like a messier version of *Gauntlet*. **3**

TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED
PS2 PSP
■ FROM: ATARI ■ OUT: TBC

A PS2 version of the brilliant 360 driver. Obviously, it doesn't look quite as sexy. **3**

ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
PS2
■ FROM: ATARI ■ OUT: JANUARY

The game of the film – with a focus on getting the characters to co-operate. **2**

CHRONOS TWINS
DS
• FROM: LEXICON • OUT: SPRING 07

A side scrolling platformer, with a different time zones on each screen. **3**

ARMOURED CORE 4
360 PS3
■ FROM: FROM SOFTWARE ■ OUT: TBC

Weak-looking robot action. In fact, we'd even go as far as saying it's a bit crap. **2**

GOD HAND
PS2
• FROM: CAPCOM • OUT: FEBRUARY

Mental beat-'em-up. So mental in fact, we can't figure out if it's any good. **3**

BATTLE STATIONS MIDWAY
360
■ FROM: EIDOS ■ OUT: TBC

This plays a bit like a WW2 RTS, except you get to control each unit yourself. **3**

DIDDY KONG RACING
DS
■ FROM: RARE ■ OUT: TBC

The N64's brilliant kart racer ported to DS with a ton of extras like Wi-Fi play. **4**

YAKUZA 2
PS2
• FROM: SEGA • OUT: TBC

Sega's Japanese face-smashing, head-stomping *GTA*. We love the original. **4**

PHOENIX WRIGHT 2
DS
■ FROM: CAPCOM ■ OUT: MARCH

Manga-fuelled courtroom drama that's the perfect fit for the DS. **4**

LOST IN BLUE 2
DS
• FROM: KONAMI • OUT: TBC

To get stranded on a desert island once is unfortunate. Twice? Careless. **3**

HEATSEEKER
PS2 360 Wii
■ FROM: CODEMASTERS ■ OUT: MARCH

Think *Afterburner* but taken off the rails – arcade flight combat heaven! **3**

AVATAR: THE LAST AIR BENDER
PSP 360 Wii PS2 CUBE GBA DS
■ FROM: THQ ■ OUT: MARCH

Cartoon spin-off where mystic kids 'bend' the elements for good use. **3**

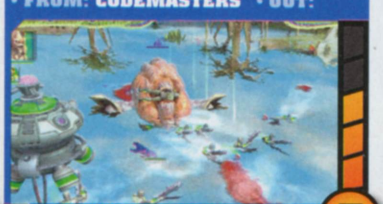
BULLET WITCH
360
■ FROM: ATARI ■ OUT: TBC

An apocalyptic setting and a gun-toting witch named Alicia. Hmm. **3**

BRIAN LARA CRICKET 2007
PS2 PC 360
■ FROM: CODEMASTERS ■ OUT: MARCH

Stop the ball from hitting your 'wickets' through use of a 'bat'. **3**

MAELSTROM
PC
• FROM: CODEMASTERS • OUT:



Online third person mix of strategy and environmental destruction. **3**

CHILDREN OF MANA
DS
■ FROM: SQUARE-ENIX ■ OUT: MARCH

A co-op RPG that plays more like *Crystal Chronicles* than its SNES namesake. **3**

VIRTUA FIGHTER 5
PS3
■ FROM: SEGA ■ OUT: MARCH

The original 3D scrapper is an acquired taste but accept no substitute. **4**

ROGUE GALAXY
PS2
■ FROM: SQUARE ENIX ■ OUT: TBC

Sci-Fi RPG from the people who made *Dragon Quest* and *Dark Chronicle*. **4**

HARVEST MOON DS
DS
• FROM: NATSUME • OUT: JANUARY

Farm-'em up where you'll use your stylus to plant crops and woo ladies. **3**

FINAL FANTASY 3
DS
■ FROM: SQUARE ENIX ■ OUT: SPRING

Ancient but clever little NES RPG that's been spruced up all nice for DS. **3**

FORZA 2
360
• FROM: MICROSOFT • OUT: JUNE

Microsofts answer to *Gran Turismo*. Looks lovely, but has been delayed until June. **3**

KINGDOM UNDER FIRE: CIRCLE OF DOOM
PC PSP 360
■ FROM: MICROSOFT ■ OUT: SUMMER 07

Moving away from battlefield strategy and into team-based RPG fun. **3**

THE DARKNESS
360 PS3
■ FROM: 2K ■ OUT: APRIL

One of those 'quieter' shooters for 360. Also shaping up to be one of the best. **4**

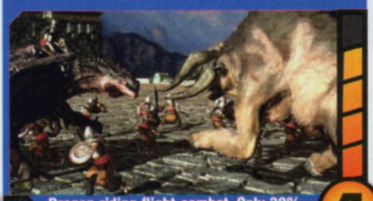
BIOSHOCK
PC 360
• FROM: 2K • OUT: SPRING 2007

Underwater first-person adventure with stunning art-deco looks. **5**

WARHAWK
PS3
■ FROM: SONY ■ OUT: TBC

Tilt-controlled war. Plays a bit like *Battlefield* with ground and air units. **4**

LAIR
PS3
• FROM: FACTOR 5 • OUT: TBC



Dragon riding flight-combat. Only 30% complete but it looks beautiful even now. **4**

VIRTUA TENNIS 3
PC PSP 360 PS3
■ FROM: SEGA ■ OUT: MARCH

The best tennis sim on the planet, now in High-Def with, oddly, PS3 tilt control. **4**

LOST PLANET
360
■ FROM: CAPCOM ■ OUT: JANUARY

Like a third-person blaster set in ice, with the best explosions ever. **5**

DEF JAM ICON
360 PS3
■ FROM: EA ■ OUT: TBC

This time, it's all about smacking your mates face in, in time to the music. **4**

FATAL INERTIA
PS3
■ FROM: KOEI ■ OUT: MARCH

Floaty future-racer, *WipEout*-style, with more natural themed tracks. **3**

ACTION LOOP
DS
• FROM: NINTENDO • OUT: JANUARY

It's a little bit like *Bust-A-Move* only in a spiral instead of a big trough. **4**

SUPREME COMMANDER
PC
■ FROM: THQ ■ OUT: JANUARY

C&C's biggest competitor. Lets you command forces across continents. **4**

COMMAND AND CONQUER 3
PC
• FROM: EA • OUT: JANUARY

The RTS daddy is back from its big break. It should be ace. **5**

SHADOWRUN
360
■ FROM: MICROSOFT ■ OUT: TBC

16-bit RPG meets next-gen first person blasting. Promising. **3**

TOO HUMAN
360
■ FROM: SILICON KNIGHTS ■ OUT: TBC

Norse god inspired futuristic adventure. Don't expect to see it any time soon. **4**

FORMULA ONE CHAMP. EDITION
PS3
• FROM: SONY • OUT: MARCH

We have to be honest – this simply doesn't look as gorgeous as it should do. **2**

HEAVY DUTY
PC
■ FROM: AKELLA ■ OUT: TBC

Futuristic Russian RTS with some intense action elements. Looks lovely. **3**

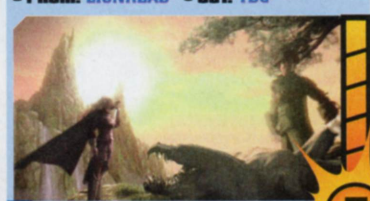
HARVEST MOON HEROES
WII
• FROM: NATSUME • OUT: TBC

Farm-'em-up with added Wii-Action. Use your remote to till soil and fell trees. **3**

AFRIKA
PS3
■ FROM: SONY ■ OUT: TBC

Beautiful views of animals mooching around the Serengeti, but no details yet. **4**

FABLE 2
360
■ FROM: LIONHEAD ■ OUT: TBC



Massively ambitious, multi-pathed RPG sequel. Should be massive. **5**

• OUT: TBC 2007 • FORMATS: PS2 • PRICE: £34.99 • DEVELOPER: CRYSTAL DYNAMICS • PUBLISHER: EIDOS • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PSP, PC • WEB: WWW.TOMBRAIDER.COM • PLAYERS: 1

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER™ ANNIVERSARY

Lara celebrates a decade of breaking records, hearts and legs in style.

Specialist: Dave Harrison

Seven blockbusting games, over a *billion* pounds in revenue produced and two films amassing over 400 million quid in tickets sales – you've got to admit that's not bad for a 10 year old.

Can you believe it's a whole decade since we first met Lara Croft? Of course, this is an opportunity to reflect on how precious time is and perhaps wonder where our lives have gone, but more importantly it's a time of celebration. And while you probably got some book tokens and a Happy Meal for your tenth birthday, Eidos have something far better planned for Lara: *Tomb Raider Anniversary* – a remake of the original adventure, the one that changed the gaming landscape completely and captured gamer's hearts worldwide.

This remixed *Raider* will of course use the engine and move set from *Legend*, which means it will be a curious blend of nostalgia and fresh ideas, as Eidos try to celebrate the past while building on the success of *Legend*.

The game will follow the same plot as the original, use the same four settings – Peru, Greece, Egypt and Atlantis – and will include all of the iconic moments you remember. Importantly, everything will be updated to suit the tastes of 2007's gamers, so just as Peter Jackson's *King Kong* remake didn't have a plasticine ape, *Anniversary* won't have a saving system that makes you want to punch a hole through your telly.

We managed to get a sneak preview of the game and we also got to speak to the people responsible for the *Anniversary* and the original, and still the best, *Tomb Raider*.

Expect all your favourite old locations to return in *Tomb Raider: Anniversary*, but with fresh new graphical twists. Doesn't it look utterly gorgeous?

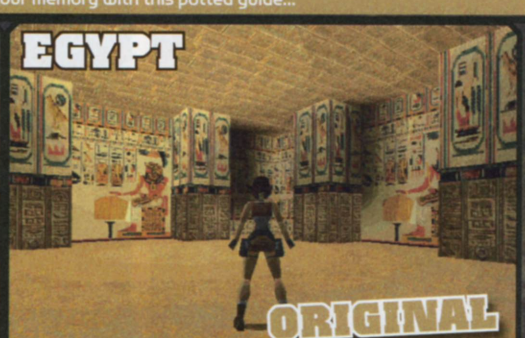
Tomb Raider: Anniversary will offer multiple paths and a big emphasis on exploration, something that *Tomb Raider: Legend* missed – it was a much more linear game.

TOMB RAIDER REFRESHER COURSE

The original *Tomb Raider* is 10 years old! So you might not remember all of it. Allow us to refresh your memory with this potted guide...

Lara's first adventure was kick-started when Jacqueline Natla asks her to retrieve the ancient Atlantean Scion that is believed to be in the Andes. Lara finds herself travelling to Peru to face the perils of ancient Incan civilisation. After avoiding the attentions of bears, bats and dinosaurs, Lara discovers the Scion only for Natla's henchman Larson to try and take it. He fails but reveals that the Scion has been split up into fragments and there's two more to collect.

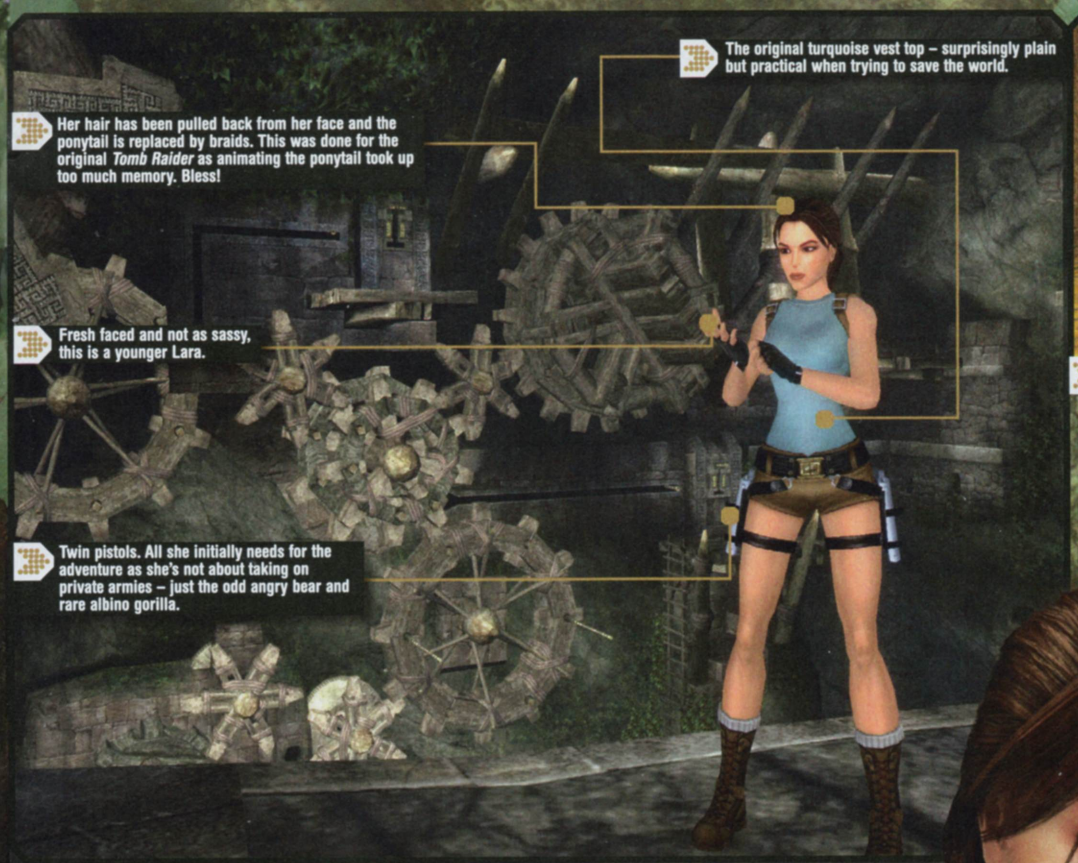
Breaking into Natla's HQ Lara finds out that the next piece can be found in St. Francis' Folly. However, Natla has sent rival explorer, Pierre Du Pont, to get it. The monastery turns out to built on a mountain that contains layer upon layer of civilisations going back to the time of ancient Greece. Here there are lions and apes to execute and a touch of alchemy to complete as Lara manages to take the next piece of the Scion off Pierre after kicking his head in.



Things go a little trippy here as out go the indigenous species and in come the mystical creatures to fight – mummies, horseman and fleshless winged beasts all have a pop. Taking all of this in her stride Lara finds the last piece in the Sanctuary of Scion. Unfortunately it is taken from her by Natla's henchmen. Lara has to plunge into water to escape and avoid being killed, but manages to follow Natla and her cronies to a mysterious island.

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY

THE REAL LARA

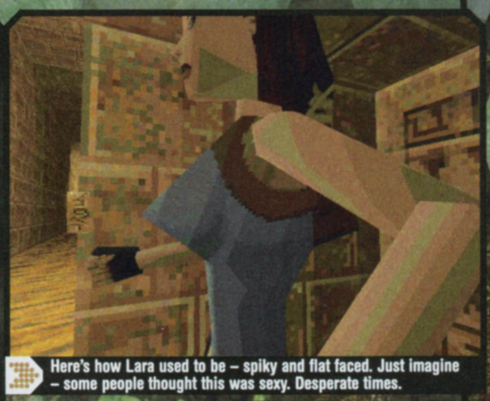


The original turquoise vest top – surprisingly plain but practical when trying to save the world.

Her hair has been pulled back from her face and the ponytail is replaced by braids. This was done for the original *Tomb Raider* as animating the ponytail took up too much memory. Bless!

Fresh faced and not as sassy, this is a younger Lara.

Twin pistols. All she initially needs for the adventure as she's not about taking on private armies – just the odd angry bear and rare albino gorilla.



Here's how Lara used to be – spiky and flat faced. Just imagine – some people thought this was sexy. Desperate times.

As Tomb Raider passes the ten year-mark and so enters the tricky adolescent period, there's some questions about identity that need sorting out, as it's not too clear who the real Lara is. Is the psychotic comic book Lara, the snotty *Angel of Darkness* Lara or the aloof movie character the real heroine? Does anybody have the answers? And, more importantly does anybody care, just as long she's shooting tigers?

Well, we care, and Toby Gard cares. This is the man who dreamed up Lara Croft way back in the early nineties, and was responsible for much of the magic of the original game. He then left developers Core, created *Galleon* for the Xbox before returning to Lara as a Design Consultant working with Crystal Dynamics on *Tomb Raider: Legend*.

Part of his role is to act as a guardian of Lara, making sure that her Lara doesn't suffer from future inconsistencies. He explains: "Everybody has an opinion of who Lara is, but you can't have that. You can't have all these people involved with it and all these different ideas of who she is, so it forces me to be the person to say no or yes."

So now he can make sure the character develops from his original vision of Lara, and *Anniversary* has presented him with the perfect opportunity to cement his image of Lara in the minds of gamers, as Gard explains:

"Originally she was just this cold nutter character and coming it back to it, it was important that we didn't change any of that in terms of someone who is posh and polite and all these things, but at any time she could just kill you and it would be just-like-that."

It's that sense of danger that is essential, though, and the *Legend* story was beginning to explain why she has this attitude and took this direction. And *Anniversary*? Well, it's about the beginning of it all...

It turns out that Natla Technologies have partially exposed the great pyramid of Atlantis on this island and Jacqueline has plans to use the Scion to make herself immortal. The game really gets difficult here as the puzzle become more cunning and every mistake more costly. Just about any false step has fatal consequence. It also includes a huge boss fight against a monstrous giant torso. But Lara must conquer all to get her hands on Natla and then destroy the Scion.

Say hello to the new Lara! She looks younger because *Anniversary* is a remake of the original game.

INTERVIEW: TALKING TOMBS

It's not every day you get to quiz the creator of a games legend so we took the time to see just what Toby Gard thinks about *Anniversary*, *Legend* and of course, Lara.

GM Do you think the needs and wants of gamers have changed over the years?

TG: That's part of why we did *Anniversary*, looking at the original game and figuring out how to improve it. Things were different back then; this was back at the beginning of the 3D revolution, so just prior to that we were talking about these 2D games that were incredibly frustrating and punishing to the player.

That was on my mind when I was making *Tomb Raider*, so I was getting the level artists to throttle back on the cruelty and stop dropping things on people's heads without any warning.

Also not very much happened, there were long periods of time where Lara was just wondering around in empty spaces. So we had to up the pacing and intensity as we've made the control system easier to use and more forgiving.

GM Will *Anniversary* be of a similar in size to the original?

TG: The spaces are twice the size as Lara moves generally much faster. It's like the waterfall – it was tiny in the original but it felt huge as people hadn't really seen stuff like that in games before. It's going to be long, especially with all the extra exploring, as unlike *Legend* there are proper multiple paths there.

GM As *Legend* was meant to a return to the 'real' *Tomb Raider*, will *Anniversary* be a very similar game?

TG: I think there is a big difference between the two. *Legend* was the first chance Crystal had to make a *Tomb Raider* game and they were very careful to make it as easy to play as possible. *Legend* is like going along linear paths – a lot. Also, *Anniversary* is a little more grounded in a fictional reality that *Legend* didn't really achieve as well. Some of those places were like "why would someone build this?" The answer is so you can jump around in it, but the original *TR* was all about trying to create spaces that you could understand what they were there for.

GM *Tomb Raider* has always had a strong sci-fi element to it. What was the thinking there?

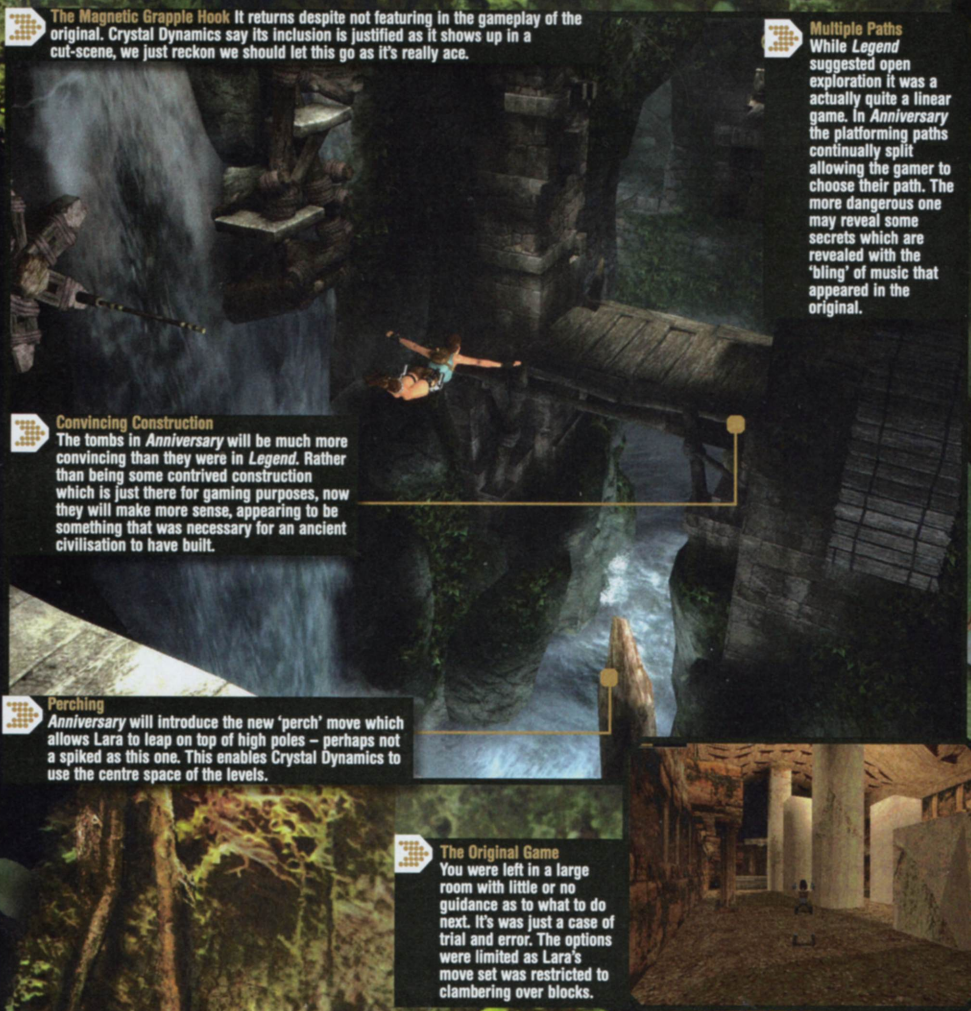
TG: I didn't want to do *Indiana Jones*, as their thing is everything in the Bible is real. I didn't want that fantasy element, that magic and so on. So it was very important to me that there was a single fictional element that tied together all the weirdness in the game – and that was basically that there's this ancient culture behind all of the other cultures, that was super-duper advanced. It didn't seem to me that that was particularly impossible. So everything else came out of that simple idea. I think in the original game it's clear that it is a sci-fi culture – in *Legend* and *Anniversary* it's not so clear.

THE REAL TOMB RAIDER

Just as it is vital to find the real Lara, discovering what made Tomb Raider so popular is also important. It went from being a slow-paced exploratory game, to Bond-style adventure, to a character-driven dirge and then to all-out action linearity. Now, with *Anniversary*, Crystal Dynamics are trying to capture the spirit of original while learning from *Legend*.

Toby Gard says: "There's lots of little things that we learnt (from *Legend*) that we're trying to improve upon in this and future games. I feel like she was going through the motions perfectly well in *Legend* and we hoped what we had was a very compelling story, but I didn't feel that the tombs felt real to me. That's one thing. And the mass murder of all those mercenaries seemed a bit odd as well. She took out a large number of people and that was never really the goal at time. Of course if you don't have some action in there people can get restless, but part of the plan to bring the original *Tomb Raider* back was that it was not combat heavy at all.

The lack of ultra-violence will be compensated by far more exploration. *Anniversary* will offer multiple paths and reward the gamer for exploring each one of them. While Crystal Dynamics declare that they see *Anniversary* 'as a gift to the fans of the series', it's obvious that they're using it as a test to see if a game that stays far more faithful to the original *Tomb Raider* concept will be popular.



The Magnetic Grapple Hook It returns despite not featuring in the gameplay of the original. Crystal Dynamics say its inclusion is justified as it shows up in a cut-scene, we just reckon we should let this go as it's really ace.

Multiple Paths While *Legend* suggested open exploration it was a actually quite a linear game. In *Anniversary* the platforming paths continually split allowing the gamer to choose their path. The more dangerous one may reveal some secrets which are revealed with the 'bling' of music that appeared in the original.

Convincing Construction The tombs in *Anniversary* will be much more convincing than they were in *Legend*. Rather than being some contrived construction which is just there for gaming purposes, now they will make more sense, appearing to be something that was necessary for an ancient civilisation to have built.

Perching *Anniversary* will introduce the new 'perch' move which allows Lara to leap on top of high poles – perhaps not a spiked as this one. This enables Crystal Dynamics to use the centre space of the levels.

The Original Game You were left in a large room with little or no guidance as to what to do next. It's was just a case of trial and error. The options were limited as Lara's move set was restricted to clambering over blocks.

HOW LARA CROFT CAME TO BE

Rick Dangerous You can just make out the Indiana Jones similarities. They're subtle though.

The New Lara Perhaps motivated by more than just the thrill of the adventure as her parents death has a lot to answer for.

The Original Lara The Gard creation, post-totty that goes adventuring for 'the sport'.

Core Design was a Derby based developer owned by UK publishers Eidos. They gave the world such games as *Chuck Rock*, *Wonderdog* and something called *Rick Dangerous*. It was the latter that was spiritual forerunner to *Tomb Raider*. Core were working on a 3D version of the game but were becoming concerned with the similarities Rick had with a certain Indiana Jones and so were keen to change the lead character.

It was a young Toby Gard that suggested having a female lead with a *Tank Girl* attitude and daring, and came up with the dual pistol wielding Lara Cruz!

Believing the surname didn't sound English enough it was swapped for Croft and suddenly a cultural icon was formed! Oh, it also helped that *Tomb Raider* sold over seven million copies.

LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY

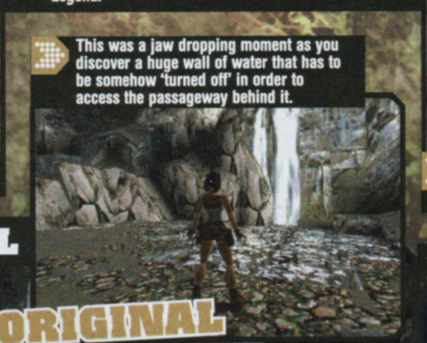
CROFT CONVERSION

Crystal Dynamics chose the Lost Valley level from *Anniversary* to show how it handles one of the game's most fondly remembered moments. Starting with a waterfall puzzle to solve, it climaxes with a T-Rex confrontation that frightened the life of us first time around and so hopefully will be just as thrilling in *Anniversary*.
If anyone is particularly concerned that we're just having to replay a 10 year old game here's some comparison shots for you to gander at.

THE LOST VALLEY

A picturesque setting complete with blues skies and lush vegetation. Feels a lot like the opening level of *Legend*.

Here the Lost Valley feels enclosed and with a tomb, due to the surrounding darkness.



This was a jaw dropping moment as you discover a huge wall of water that has to be somehow 'turned off' in order to access the passageway behind it.

THE WATERFALL

It's look slightly more convincing with the *Legend* engine, but the idea behind the puzzle remains the same.

THE T-REX

Looms out of the gloom giving you the biggest fright possible on the PSone. Get backflipping and pistol firing and pray that you take it down in time...

ANNIVERSARY

This is something Crystal Dynamics want to keep for themselves at the moment but we fully expect it to be big and scary.

THE RAPTOR FIGHT

The new super-bouncy, super-quick Lara can take on a whole horde of raptors at once despite their attempts to surround her.

Here they only turned up in pairs and were quite easily dealt with – just open fire with the pistols and keep hopping backwards.

THE COG PUZZLE

The three missing cogs could all be found in the Lost Valley then placed in this far from complicated series of gears.

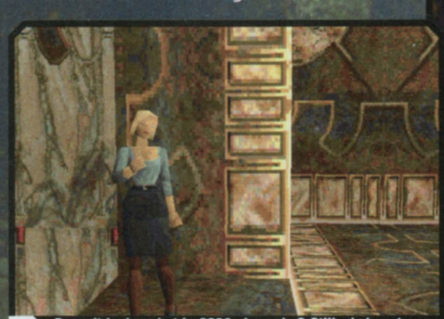
The scale of the problem is increased somewhat but the solution is very similar – just a couple of cogs.

JACQUELINE NATLA

The feisty bobbed blonde isn't the megalomaniac ruthless business woman she seems, as she is in fact an ancient ruler of Atlantis who was imprisoned by joint rulers Qualopec and Tihocan. But of course!

In 1990 a meteorite hits the New Mexico desert and damages Natla's stasis container and ends up freeing her. Taking the name Jacqueline to fool people into thinking she's human, Natla establishes Natla Technologies, which becomes a huge multi-national company. Using the influence she now has, Natla tries to find the three pieces of Atlantean Scion in order to harness its powers.

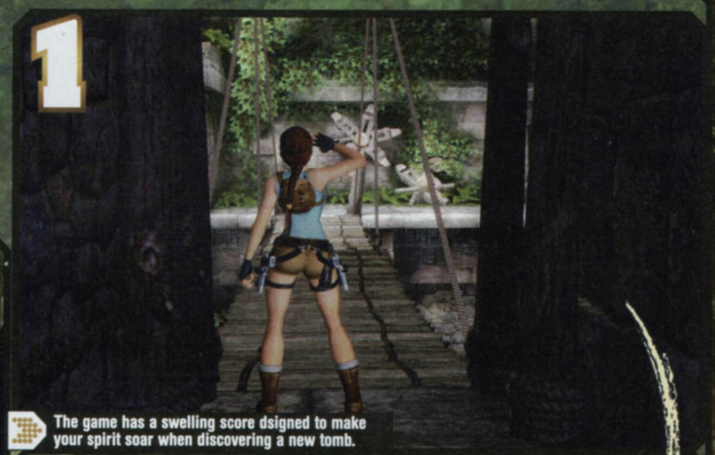
While it seems Natla is defeated by Lara it seems she is likely to show up in future *Tomb Raider* games as crates bearing the logo of Natla Technologies show up in *Tomb Raider: Legend*.



Doesn't look so hot in 2006, does she? Still, she's not actually human, so we wouldn't worry.

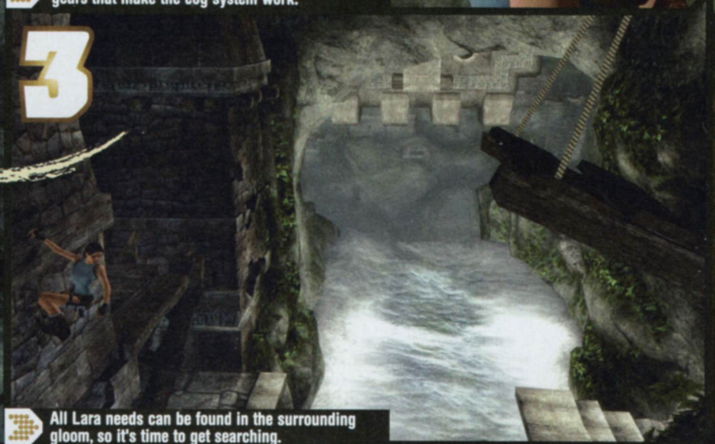
GEAR AS FOLK

While the size of the gear puzzle problem has increased in *Anniversary* compared to the original, the general principles remain the same. Lara must stop the flow to the waterfall as the current is so strong it prevents any swimming upstream, but also there is a secret entrance behind the water that must be accessed. The first job is to find the missing gears that make the cogs, which must be placed in the correct order – and then everything must be set in motion. It's the perfect *Tomb Raider* puzzle as it involves a combination of a natural setting with a believable construction that allows Lara to demonstrate her incredible set of moves, and the gamer to demonstrate some brain power.

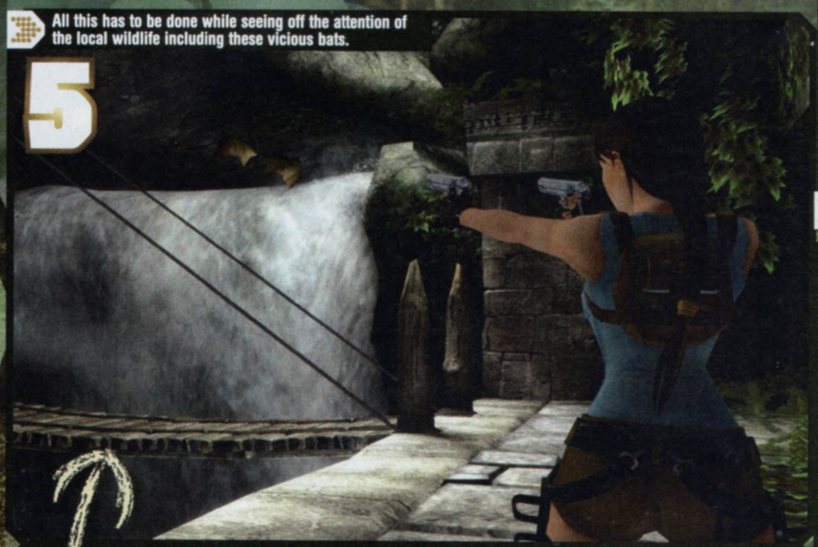


The game has a swelling score dsigned to make your spirit soar when discovering a new tomb.

It looks complex but all that's missing is some gears that make the cog system work.



All Lara needs can be found in the surrounding gloom, so it's time to get searching.



All this has to be done while seeing off the attention of the local wildlife including these vicious bats.

The *Legend* move set allows Lara to explore both high and low, and use the central area of the tomb.

GREAT AND GROTTY

Anniversary offers a unique chance to revisit the very best bits of *Tomb Raider*, while improving the poorer elements. Here's what we want – and don't want – to see...

These are the iconic moments we want to see returning in *Tomb Raider: Anniversary!*

- Battling the T-Rex in the Lost Valley
- Getting a mauling from a very cuddly bear
- Turning leads bars to gold
- Diving 100 feet into a pool the size of handkerchief near the end of game
- Finishing the game with a gentle slide down a slope
- Having to set Lara on fire just to complete a puzzle
- The daring bike jump in the Egypt level cut-scene, but this time playable
- Scrapping the giant skinless torso

And here are some of the features of the original that we don't want to see returning. They didn't make us happy.

- Having save points seemingly spaced about an hour away from each other
- No checkpoints
- Not being able to find the opening in a pool of water because the textures all look the same
- Accidentally hitting jump and falling several hundred feet to a shin-splintering death
- The bug that was in the Saturn version that required all keys to be put in correct order
- Having to walk on every platform just in case of slipping off
- Getting killed by a bat
- Sidestepping just to get in the right position to pull a lever

As Lara moves much faster nowadays *Anniversary* has had to be expanded over the original game, otherwise you'd whip through it!

The new artwork is leagues ahead of the old stuff, isn't it? Just brilliant.

INTERVIEW: CRYSTAL CLEAR

Crystal Dynamics are the studio responsible for restoring the spring in Lara's step, so we backflipped at the chance to speak to *Anniversary* producer Lulu LaMer and Art Director Andrew Wood.

GM Do you think the idea of returning to Lara's first adventure will be appealing to gamers?

AW: I think so, because when you think of raiding tombs you think of Egypt and Greece, those are the places that comes to mind and you want to visit. The four environments that were in the original game were really strong and fondly remembered by a lot of people, so I think that alone will be reason enough for people to revisit them with today's cutting edge technology and better graphics.

GM After the success of *Legend*, could *Anniversary* be seen as a step backwards?

LL: I don't really see it as a step back in terms of the fans we're trying to attract. We see this as not just a game but a gift to the fans of the series, and also as an opportunity for those who never played *Tomb Raider* to experience the first adventure.

AW: It think the point is that we were trying to reinvigorate Lara Croft with *Legend* and we succeeded in doing that, so for me it feels natural to go back and revisit that first experience – and to add enough new twists and clear up enough points for those who played the first one, so they can get something new from it.

GM Lara was quite mysterious in the original game as it was as much about what we didn't know about her, as what we did. Will the new game capture this?

LL: I think we did start pulling Lara in that direction a bit with *Legend*. You know a lot about her and you see her interacting with lots of different people, and learn about her history, but she's still this enigmatic character. And with *Anniversary* we're keeping consistent with the idea that she is this enigmatic character that you never really get to the bottom of. That's the benefit of working in the same studio and with Toby; this studio vision for who Lara is, and it's going through all the games that we are working on.

GM Was keeping the grapple hook in the game a big decision?

AW: Not really, as it one of those things we're used to having, and it is there in the first game. It gives us the opportunity to do interesting things with spaces. If we didn't have these tools we might end up in a situation where Lara was stuck to the wall all the time and not in the middle of a big space, swinging around on a rope or teetering around on a high platform. Also it does give you a different emotional response from climbing around on a wall, so it's important for us to have those different tools and have that different variety.

GM The original game offered over 30 hours of gameplay, how does *Anniversary* compare?

AW: We went through the exercise of building the exactly same spaces in our *Legend* engine, and using our move set with *Legend*; using our engine it was four times faster to move through the environment.

LL: She runs faster and the controls are better so it is just a much better experience in terms of pace.

THE LEGEND OF
ZELDA®
Twilight Princess

GAMES MASTER

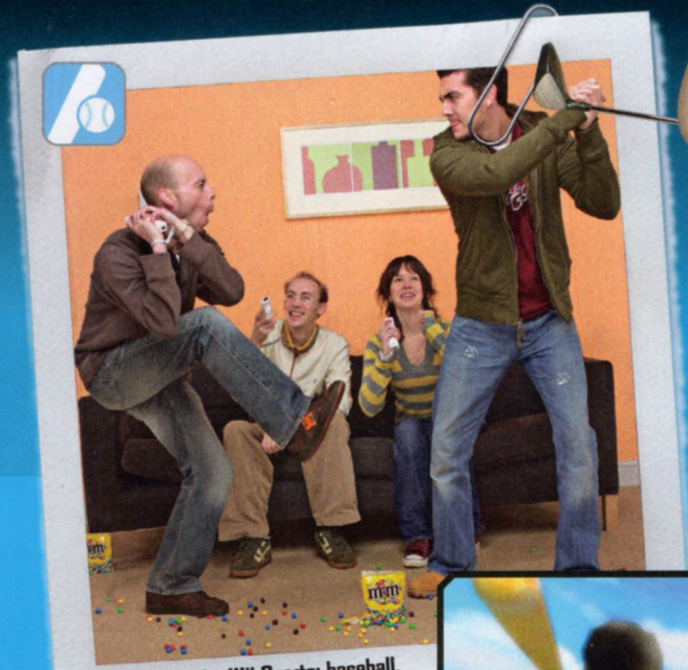
SO YOU THINK YOU CAN BEAT US?

Ever wondered just how good game journalists are at playing games? Reckon you might be better? Well, here's where you find out...

Be honest, you think you're a better gamer than us, don't you? It's okay, we have no problem with delusional types. In fact, we have a few in the office who've convinced themselves they're the best when it comes to joypad shenanigans. It's partly why, thanks to M&M's, we're running this series of multi-player challenges – to determine once and for all who does rule the roost around here.

As a finale to this series, enter the Wii's revolutionary control system and *Wii Sports*. A true gamer will have no problem embarking on a new gaming landscape.

Just as any true gamer soon realises the hard coating of M&M's makes them the perfect gaming snack, by keeping all their chocolatey goodness safely out of contact from hot fingers. A crucial consideration when you have a brand new, pure white controller...



First up on the Wii Sports: baseball. Team Jes have barely stepped up to the plate that already they're struck out, leaving the supremely confident Kath and Rob duo to go on to strike a couple of astonishing home runs.

Team Rob thwacks it out of the park in baseball! In fact, Rob swings the remote so hard it almost takes Jes's head off. Always wear your wrist strap, people!

TEAM ROB

ROB

Much to the despair of the other guys at university, all-round sports god Rob matched his exceptional exercising prowess with a First in advanced quantum physics.

Favourite sport: All
Most hated sport: None
Sporting glory: "Have you got all day?"
Sporting hero: Himself
M&M's of choice: Red

KATH

A worrying consumption of Jackie Chan films at an early age saw Kath leave school early and enrol in Hong Kong's finest kung fu school. She remains supremely fit.

Favourite sport: Street fighting
Most hated sport: Mini-motorbike racing
Sporting glory: Iron Fist champion
Sporting hero: Ryu
M&M's of choice: Blue

VERSUS

TEAM JES

JES

Although he doesn't like to talk about it, Jes travels the globe to run marathons for charity and to date has had several international hospitals named after him.

Favourite sport: Running
Most hated sport: Synchronised swimming
Sporting glory: "It's the taking part"
Sporting hero: Jesse Owens
M&M's of choice: Green

GERAINT

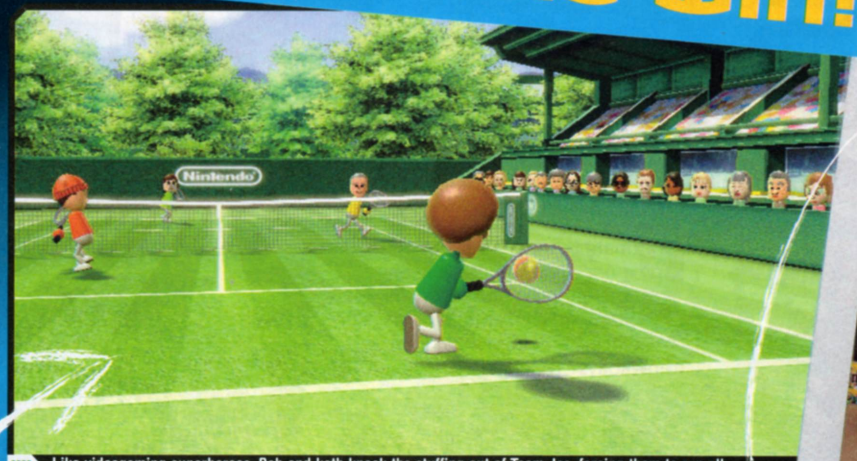
Geraint often lobbies the Oxford English Dictionary publishers to invent a new word for 'competitive', claiming that's too weak to accurately describe his character.

Favourite sport: Darts
Most hated sport: Chess
Sporting glory: County darts champion
Sporting hero: Eric Bristow
M&M's of choice: Yellow

The boy Evans tears up the green with a stunning display of golf. "It's all in the wrist", he said, modestly.

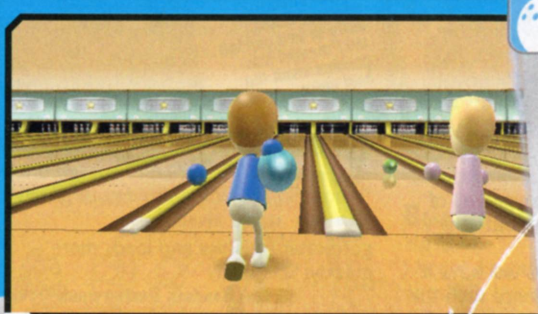
Having quickly adapted their gaming brains to the control system, Jes and Geraint take to golf with a masterful display of eye-hand coordination, and both outdrive and outputt the competition to a draw.

TEAM ROB GO FOR THE WIN!



Like videogaming superheroes, Rob and kath knock the stuffing out of Team Jes, forcing them to run all over the shop with no hope of victory. Go Team Rob!

Despite losing the tennis challenge last month, Team Rob are now the ones oozing confidence from every pore. Geraint hands them a towel but like a supertanker, nothing will throw them off course – and their course is a straight-set win!



Kath scores trike after strike, leaving Team Jes to weep salty tears of despair. Is there any hope for them?

Leading 2-1, Team Rob can't be beaten. But they can be matched, a situation that would likely send Rob into spontaneous combustion. No need, though – Jes fumbles every frame while Geraint is still shellshocked from having lost at tennis!

Their confidence shattered by their losses, Team Jes take to boxing with a defiance borne of desperation. But it's no use – Team Rob trounce them! Things quickly devolve into actual boxing as Geraint gets the hump. What a sore loser!

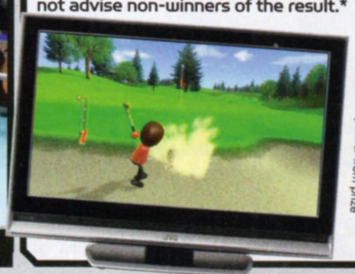
COMPETITION

WIN A HD 32" TV

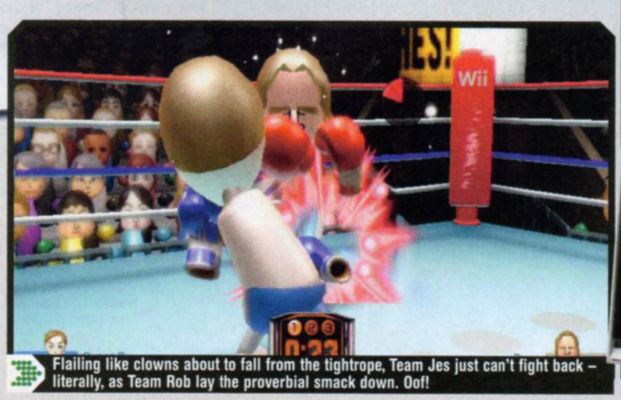
Life isn't worth living if you're not playing games on a decent telly with your mates. Thankfully, M&M's are giving you the chance to win an amazing 32" HD-ready TV from JVC, worth a whopping £1,400! And to go with it, you'll get a stunning DVD digital cinema system.

We want to see how you lot play your games. Take a photo of you and your mates playing and then either text it (attach your MMS picture and then text MNMCOMP, followed by your name to 07738 647 177), or email it to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk. The funniest and most original entry will win the lot!

Only UK residents over the age of 15 may enter. Text messages will cost you £1, plus your standard network tariff rate. Please source all necessary permissions. Lines are open from 10 August to 27 December inclusive. We'll not advise non-winners of the result.*



TV shown may differ from prize



Flailing like clowns about to fall from the tightrope, Team Jes just can't fight back – literally, as Team Rob lay the proverbial smack down. Oof!

RESULT

GET IN!
ROB'S TEAM WINS!

3-1

*Competition is open to residents of the UK only. Only one entry per person. Employees of Future Publishing Ltd and third parties are not eligible to enter. Only UK residents over the age of 15 may enter. Text messages will cost you £1, plus your standard network tariff rate. Please source all necessary permissions. Lines are open from 10 August to 27 December inclusive. We'll not advise non-winners of the result. No employees of Future Publishing Ltd and third parties are eligible to enter. Only one entry per person. Publicity may be given to the winner's name and county of residence. Entrants must be willing to have their photograph published. By entering you agree to be bound by the rules. The prize is as stated and no alternatives, cash or otherwise are available. Publicity may be given to the winner's name and county of residence. Entrants must be willing to have their photograph published. By entering you agree to be bound by the rules. The prize is as stated and no alternatives, cash or otherwise are available.

WE ♥ LOVE GAMES

Welcome to the bit of GM that's stuffed with your mail, game ideas, unreasonable demands – anything that shows how much we♥games. With a capital ♥!

EMAIL US: gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk, subject heading We Love Games
WRITE TO US: We Love Games, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.
TEXT US: Send LOVE then your message to 84070. But keep it short!

Mad? Bad? Sad? See how each letter writer's feeling at a glance!

Happy | Mad | Unhappy | Angry | Surprised | Normal

Bargain Hunt

Dear GM,

I was at a money-raising fair on the 4th of November to raise money for poor people in Africa and I managed to bag two classic Game & Watches for a quid each. Result!

Danny Flynn, Dundee

Nice one Danny, not only do you get to help out those less fortunate than yourself but get some nostalgic gaming heaven into the bargain. And have you seen how much Game & Watches are going for on Ebay nowadays? Madness!

FANSITE OF THE MONTH
www.psp-vault.com
The PSP's No. 1 fansite, apparently – PSP Vault is brimming with fresh content including the latest zany rumours from Japan (the dude that runs it is fluent), an exhaustive library of game saves, video content and customised icons plus forums brimming with some surprisingly engaging debate (and nary a fanboy in sight). Hey, over 20,000 members can't be wrong...
Carl Gisborne, email
GOT A FANSITE!
Any game-related websites you've either made or couldn't live without? Email, write or text and tell us! Potential free goodies await the best entry...

STAR LETTER!

Cake Wars

Hey GM,

After seeing the NES controller cake in *GM*179's We Really Love Games (which I may say looks very scrumptious indeed), I thought I'd send these shots of game-related cakes my Mom's made over the years.

If you look closely at the Famicom cake you'll notice the liquorice controller 'wires'. A classy touch. As for the *Pokémon* cake, the reason Squirtle is green is because Mum ran out of blue food colouring!

Send us a cake and we'll send you a game, Michael!

Michael O'Brien, email

Mmm, they look delicious Michael. Any chance of getting your Mum to bake us one and pop it in the post?

Halloween Hootenanny

Hey Team GM,

Here's a montage of photos from my Halloween fancy dress night out. I went as a Question Block from *Super Mario Bros*, with my pals going as those famous plumbers themselves!

DJ KevTastic, MySpace

Looks like you had a top time Kev, we just hope no-one tried headbutting you to win a power up...

In Control

Dear GM,

I've noticed how hardcore gamers seem worried that the Wii remote will be difficult to get to grips with. For instance, I initially had a bit of trouble using a keyboard and mouse on PC after using a joypad all of my gaming life but now I love it!

I think gamers will have a similar experience with the Wii controls, awkward at first but with enough practice will become second nature. I'm positive Ninty will have a major success on their hands!

Danny Ribeiro, email

We're with you on this on 100% Danny, Wii could be the console that brings gaming joy to the masses...

Non PC

Dear GM,

I am writing in response to the star letter of *GM*178. In my view PCs are the most awkward consoles (*ahem* – Ed) for shooters. I find my Xbox 360 pad much more comfy for FPSs and it's got better graphics and loads more quickly. So there!

Lee Goodall, Burton-upon-Trent

Harsh words there Lee. Is he right, PC gamers?

Model Gamer

Hiya GM,

It's me, Christopher Papasavva, again. You published my Toad and Luigi models in last months so to thank you I made this Wii Model for you...

It's a little fat, but cheers anyway!

Chris Savva, email

Chris, you've surpassed yourself! Take a bow sir. Looks a bit chunkier than a real one though...

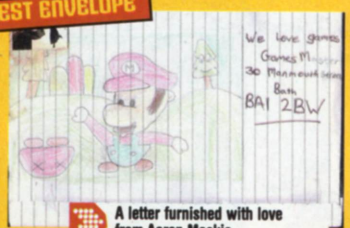
THE SPAM FILTER

GAME OBSESSED: "I love games more than my sleep and food." We've always wanted to know if carts were edible, Owen Adkins...
PS3 HATEBOY: "Good Lord, will somebody give Sony a kick up the arse." We take it you're not buying a PS3, Khyl Hardman?
HANDHELD WII? POSSIBLE NAMES: "Wee Wii, Pee Wii, Porta-Wii and Plat-to-potty." Inspired, Jack Reader.
CHEEKY GIRL: "Do you think I could persuade a game off you for 5p?" Tempting Emily, but no.

NINTY FRESH

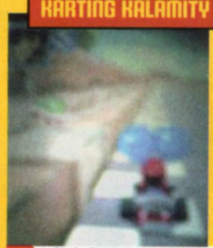
Another month, another cool Wii-related Bebo drawing. Ta, Russy...

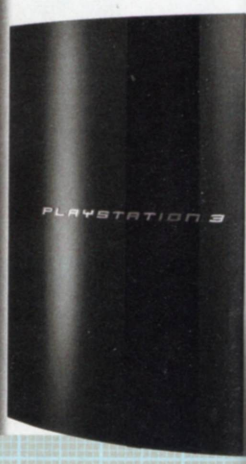
BEST ENVELOPE



A letter furnished with love from Aaron Mackie.

KARTING KALAMITY


Chris Savva has wedged Mario's balloons. Ouch.



WIN! The Star Letter each month will win a game from *GM*'s shiny and bulging Big Sack O' Games!

WE REALLY LOVE GAMES

YOU THOUGHT YOU LOVED GAMES?

WE CHAT TO THE GAMERS THAT HAVE TAKEN IT ALL TOO FAR...

This month: Martin Leung, the Video Game Pianist. Go to www.videogamepianist.com for more...

GM: When did you first start playing?
Martin: When I finished my senior year of high school in the summer of 2004. My friends and I were thinking about what video I should make to possibly be featured on Ebaum's World, a popular joke and humor Internet site. We eventually decided for me to play *Super Mario* songs on the piano.

GM: What are your favourite pieces?
Martin: The Main Theme to *Super Mario Brothers*, the Legend of Zelda, *Earthworm Jim:* Banjo Race, *Final Fantasy X:* To Zanarkand and Suteki da Ne, the *Halo 2* theme, and the *Sonic the Hedgehog* theme.

GM: Which composers do you admire?
Martin: Koji Kondo, Tommy Tallarico, Jack Wall, Marty O'Donnell, Michael Salvatori, Jason Hayes, and more.

GM: Favourite games?
Martin: *Super Mario Brothers 1, Halo 2, Sonic the Hedgehog 2, 3,* and *Knuckles, Prince of Persia 1, Simon the Sorcerer 1, Monkey Island 1* and *3, Tetris,* and *C&C: Red Alert.*

GM: What are you up to now?
Martin: Currently I am in Rio de Janeiro as part of the Video Games Live world tour. After the Rio performance, I will perform in São Paulo and London.

A stack of thanks to you, stout fellow!

The *Sonic the Hedgehog* soundtrack, in particular, is amazingly nice when played on the piano.

REALLY LOVE GAMES?
Send us your pics to You Thought You Loved Games?, GamesMaster, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW and you could be featured in the pages of *GM!*

Own Goal

Hey GM.

C'mon guys. I, for one, can't understand your new found love for *FIFA*. What's going on? *FIFA 07* is still the same old rubbish. I think EA have brainwashed you! Wake up guys – *PES* is, and always will be, the king.

Danny Wilson (again), Luton

We agree that *PES is* still better Danny – only one percent better, mind you. Can Konami raise their game next season? What do you think?

Sofa Soccer

Hi GM,

Here's a pic for the competition of me and my friend playing *Pro Evo 5*. Trying to get above the competition :P

Kevin Tanker, via email

The ever-talented Dan Malin sent us these illustrations dotted around the page. Ain't they good?

Is your fave player Peter Couch by any chance Kev? Hoo!

That looks possibly dangerous – don't try it at home!

Bricking It

'lo GM,

I heard a rumour that a LEGO wrestling is in the works. Is

LIST OF DEMANDS

What YOU want!

Saints Row

- More licensed hip hop clothes.
- Funkier hairstyles.
- More gangs/choice of gangs.
- Choose individual gang members.
- Cooler cars to hijack.
- More achievements.
- Better hoodies.
- Special guest celebs out and about.
- Vehicle training lessons.
- Break into houses.
- Able to play sports.
- Create-a-family mode.
- A decent ending to the game!

Mark Adams, Bodmin

MAKE YOUR LIST OF DEMANDS!
Reckon you could juice up your fave game series? Either do a BSc in Computer Programming or get your ideas out into the world by sending your List of Demands to our Monmouth Street addy or gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk! Free office goodies for the best ones...

HI-SCORE CAM

Madness!

Yo, GamesMaster! How are you guys and gals? Got a score challenge for you. 100% in Lego Star Wars 2, with the max 4 billion studs... yep, billion... and I got it all in two days playing time. Don't know if you can see in the picture but it says 48:05:02:68. Beat that!

Andrew Berry, email

That's waaay too hardcore for us Andrew. Can anyone possibly top it?

MY GAME IDEA

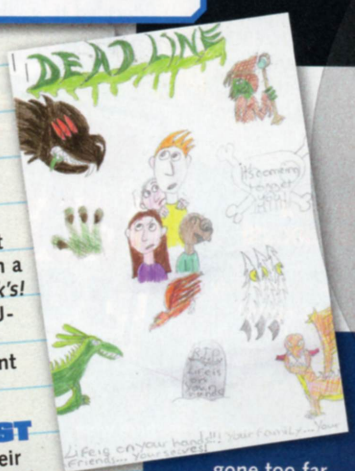
NAME: DEAD LINE
COPYRIGHT: LISA HARRISON

QUOTE FOR THE BOX: "IT'S COMING TO GET YOU!"

WHAT IS IT: *Four pals have just broken up for the summer hols. They steal a card and go joyriding, but it all goes wrong when the cops start chasing them and they end up in a parallel world. They have precisely 48 hours to escape otherwise the dreaded Boggagoth will eat their families. Now that's what you call a deadline!*

HOW IT PLAYS: *GTA meets Canis Canem Edit* with a bit of survival horror and puzzling thrown in. There's even a skateboard section a la *Tony Hawk's!* Each of your characters – J-Lo, Jack, Michael and Angelo – also has different strengths and weakness.

POTENTIAL BEST BIT: The baddies, or their names at least! Would *you* like to meet a Ranico, a Cronsur or the deadly Shoggagoth?



JUDGEMENT

We reckon it all sounds a little bit like *Final Destination: The Game,* but that's no bad thing. Survival Horror meets *GTA* – a guaranteed smash in *GM's* opinion.

PS3 POSER

So, PS3 then – worth yer cash or not?

Hey GM,

I really need advice, so I thought I'd come to the professionals! It's about the Xbox 360 and the PS3. I originally saved up £300 for the PS3 but *that* delay has narked me big time.

I've never been a big fan of Microsoft, but games like *Assassin's Creed, Gears of War* and *SmackDown! vs. Raw* (which was cancelled on PS3!) have turned my head despite the allure of *Final Fantasy 13* and *Heavenly Sword.* I'm always yo-yoing back and forth and it's really annoying! What's your advice?

Craig Garford, email

Dear GM,

I have always been a Sony fanboy (with the exception of the N64). However, with the PS3 Sony have gone too far.

First off there was the delay! Why? Sony has gambled with new technology that is going to ruin the console war for them – the price tag is crippling and my parents won't even consider buying me one...

On a more positive note, I am unbelievably exited about the new *Zelda* after your review last ish, so it's a Wii for me this Crimbo.

Sam Cowen, Kettering

Dear GamesMaster,

£180 for Wii? Now that's cheap. Who's going to pay £400+ for PS3? Nintendo come up with great ideas, all Sony do is pump up the graphics.

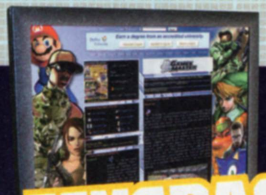
Jack, Southampton

Hey GM,

£425 for a PS3? Madness, so I traded in my big black old PS2 for a 360. I'm now enjoying *Dead Rising* and *Call of Duty 3,* and with the likes of *Alan Wake* and *Halo 3* to come I'm really happy I swapped Sony for Microsoft...

Tom Bradley, email

Do Blu-Ray/delays/*that* price tag spell the end for PS3 or will it still triumph? The general vibe we're getting from you guys is that Sony has made one mistake too many, but after sinking our teeth into *MotorStorm* and *Fall of Man* this ish we're really starting to feel the love for PS3... keep sending us those views!



MYSPACE MOUTH OFF!

A selection of the sane and not-so-sane comments from *GM*'s home on the web...

Advent Children rocks.
Stuart Mills

Hey *GM*, set me up wit Emma Sullivan who was the hot chick in "we want your job" issue 179. She is soooooooo buff.
Jason Mackay

I need more *GamesMaster*. Once a month isn't enough! Once a fortnight is better :D Hire more staff
Aynz

Can u believe how small the Wii is? I thought it was gonna be big!
Pahrenheit

Fatalities in *UMK3* from Marketplace seem more awkward to pull off with the Xbox360 pad.
JD

Turned off the stamina system in *SmackDown! Vs Raw 2007* and changed it back to the old style controls. Awesome game though!
R.D™

I once found a very early issue of *GM* in a bin. Took it. =P
[Ali_Cat]

When shooting a mime should you use a silencer????
Wilbo

Zune will fall flat on its arse.
Craig™ from MySpace

Accept me as u'r friend god damn it!!!!!!
Ricki Hamilton

*Pulls down trousers and shows off the snazzy steel plated codpiece with *Zelda* Shield design*
Thezombiemessiah

If you're not MySpace inclined, come and join *GM* on our new Bebo site! Surf to: http:/gamesmastermag.bebo.com

www.myspace.com/gamesmastermag

WE LOVE GAMES

The bit of *GM* that's stuffed to bursting point with your mail

there any truth to this?

Sam C, email

Nope, but Batman is next on Traveller's Tales agenda, Sam.

Halo Goss

Hey GM,

Got an exclusive *Halo 3* rumour for you from my reliable Stateside sources. They reckon that Robin Atkin Downes (the voice actor for the Prophet of Regret in *Halo 2*) has swollen glands meaning a possible delay for the game on Xbox 360! Also, attached is an exclusive piece of *Halo 3* concept art.

Covenant, via top secret email

Hmm, not quite convincing, is it?

Hmm, we reckon you'd be better off sticking to *GM* for your *Halo 3* goss Covenant. Thanks for the piccie though – draw it yourself?

Poke-balls

Hi GM,

What's up with *Pokémon* DS? *Fire Red* and *Leaf Green* were brilliant, and I played them to death! *Emerald* was AWESOME too! I was really looking forward to *Diamond* and *Pearl*, but Nintendo let me down. (Although the touch screen was put to good use.)

Please deliver a message to Nintendo to make the next one better. For example, the Pokémon could do a lot more than just wobble!!

Ryan Bryce, email

What did all the rest of you *Pokémon* fans think of *Diamond/Pearl*?

Mental Tony

Dear GM,

Last night I was playing *Tony Hawk's American Wasteland* and I came across an amazing glitch. There I was, minding my own business when I decided to go into a small tunnel when all of a sudden my player got stuck, kept flipping around and pulling off mad tricks!

Eventually I got a score of 37,804,030 times by 47. Amazing! The only thing was I couldn't land it and so had to quit the level.

Nathan Robinson, Warrington

That's nuts, Nathan! Anyone else got any crazy gaming glitch tales?

We're not sure Activision meant for this to happen, eh?

THINGS TO MAKE AND DO!

LOVE GAMES!

SO DO WE!
Getting all hot under the collar about a games-related debate? Caught a bizarre gaming moment on camera? Bagged a monstrous high score? Written, starred or directed in your own game-related film? (Really?) Then tell us! Send all your comments, piccies and movies to the usual addresses – the most deserving specimens might even win something!

THIS MONTH'S TASK...

Dan Malin tears it up again with some amazing *Zelda* and *MGS* art, plus a cracking Christmas card! Mark Ross is responsible for Mario and Sean Maguire has a real talent for *Dragonball*...

Dan Malin does it again. Bravo, felia!

Mark and Sean get colourful on our, er, asses. Um.

WE WANT YOUR JOB!

Pestering the jammiest jobsmiths in the business!

it's David Braben, co-creator of legendary 8-bit epic *Elite*! You're a gaming legend!

It's an honour to be called that, but it also feels very strange! It has a sense of being 'ancient'; I'd like to think the best is to come.

How did you get into the industry?

I was very lucky. When I started programming, there were very few games on home computers, and most of them were pretty poor. I was in the right place at the right time. Not only that, but I was fascinated by 3D graphics, something that had not yet come to games at that time.

You studied physics at Cambridge – impressive! Do you reckon you'd be designing spaceships or something now if you hadn't been mad about games?

I was always interested in science, particularly astronomy, so I'd like to think that's where I would have gone. Back then, I think we all expected there to be people living on the Moon by now, so spaceship design might not have seemed so far fetched.

What does a typical working day involve?

It's a mix of meeting people and talking about our games – press, publishers, distributors – design work on our future games (the best bit for me), and testing our games currently in development.

Any sneaky info on your upcoming PS3 title, *The Outsider*?

It's not just on PS3 – it will be on Xbox 360 too. And you'll love it!

What games do you play in your spare time?

Lately, I've been playing mostly on the Xbox 360 – Oblivion, Test Drive, and some of the Live Arcade games. I was delighted to see Defender up there last week.

And, finally, do you reckon we'll see another *Elite* in our lifetimes?

Yes. It has become a bit of a running joke to an extent, with the project having been on 'hold' for a long time, but yes – it will come.

Jinkies! This is the workspace of David Braben, a legend! He works for Frontier Developments.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

1. Bookcase with some of our games, and some awards, used as book-ends!
2. Computer – One of the new Dell XPS laptops, very fast; I've been very pleased with it.
3. I had a cold last month, and the tissues are still there... oops.
4. Hi-Fi, so I can listen to music and hear game sound effects clearly
5. My dog, Gem. Comes in to work with me every day, and sleeps under my desk.

4 FREE GIFTS. 2 MAGAZINES. 1 MASSIVE CHRISTMAS ISSUE.

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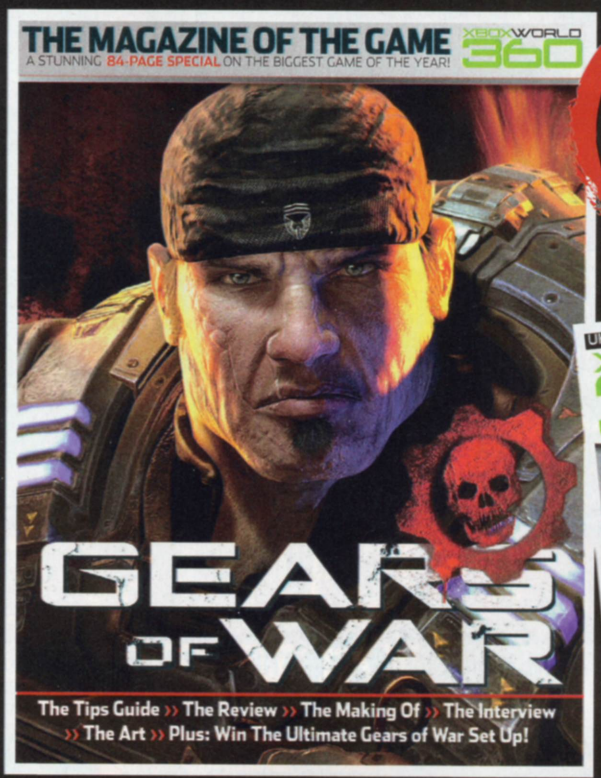
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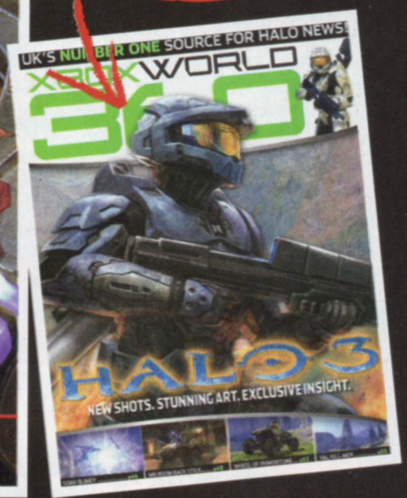

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We ♥ Old Games

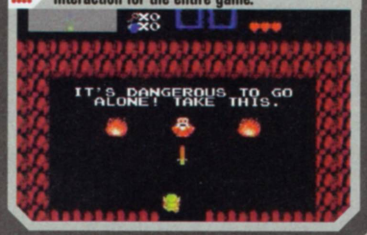
Join us as we angle our Lens of Truth at the rich and sprawling history of *Zelda*...

With the studious and unkempt Rector of Retro, Adam Norton

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA (1986, FDS/NES)

The wonderful thing about *Zelda* is that all the stuff that defines the series was there from the start – disregarding the lack of villages, the first game seems almost comfortingly familiar, with all the dungeon-solving and monster battling we've come to expect. And it was revolutionary, too, predating *Dragon Quest*, the first true console RPG, by a few months. Excellent moment: finding that – hey! – the world scrolled in all four directions.

Fantastically, the pieces of Hyrule's currency are as large as a fully grown adult.



This is pretty much the level of talky interaction for the entire game.

A LINK TO THE PAST (1991, SNES)

Five years on, and *LttP's* world unfurled like a vast patchwork quilt of unbridled adventure. The game remains a favourite of fans to this day, and it's not hard to see why: it was simply so colourful, so inventive, so stashed with little touches and sweeping cinematic moments, as to make the average player write a little melody on a lute. Until now, only *Ocarina of Time* ever really matched its scope. Excellent moment: turning into a pink bunny when you first enter the Dark World.

Ah, the clandestine Heart Pieces – a fine reward for astute pokings about.

As usual, the bosses are superb. Except, er, this one, which hugely frustrated us.

OCARINA OF TIME (1998, N64)

Christmas '98 was a special time, with many a young lad and lass hoping their parents had had the wit to secure a copy of *Ocarina* before the empty tides of It Unnervingly Selling Out Everywhere swept over to engulf them. And they were (hopefully) richly rewarded: the game was *spectacular*. Epitomised best, in fact, by the stunning Hyrule Field, the biggest environment seen in a console game at that time. Elsewhere, the game was like an even more epic version of *LttP*, with the same style of varied and atmospheric dungeons, and wonderfully staged set-pieces. Wholly and completely perfect. Excellent moment: sneaking past the castle guards in a sort of fantasy *MGS*.

Ah, Hyrule Field. Finding yourself here for the first time was breathtaking.

The Z-targeting's been copied by *countless* other 3D action games since.

The design is intoxicating, and hasn't been matched entirely by anything since.

In a way, it's actually the perfect translation of *LttP's* style into 3D.

WIND WAKER (2002, GC)

Criticising the fetch-quests at the end (which this page admits to enjoying a fair bit) is foolish in the face of such gleaming poetry. *Wind Waker* was, and is, a beautifully flowing game, with animation *and* play as fluid as a Disney cartoon. The world's simply so dreamy, so lavishly stylised, that you frequently 'came to' and thought, "Hold on – did those past few hours really happen?" And sailing the ocean gave an entirely new sense and thrill of adventure, with islands appearing as silhouettes on the horizon and then drifting in to form mini-puzzles awash with colour and intrigue. Simply something you *must* experience. Excellent moment: we don't want to spoil it, but one word – 'sepia'.

TOP 5: UNUSUAL ZELDA GAMES

5 FOUR SWORDS ADVENTURES (2004, GC)

So much of a luxury (with every player needing a GBA) that precious few were ever able to get the most out of it. it remains the differently-coloured-Links-solving-dungeons-and-squabbling-over-Rupees game of champions. Excellent moment: Getting three friends and the equipment to play it.

Four Links, or a splendid novelty compass?

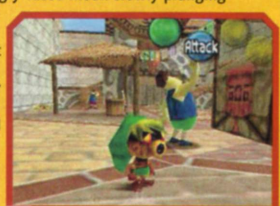
4 THE BS ZELDA GAMES (1996/1997, SNES)

BS stands for 'Broadcast Satellaview', and these were games that were transmitted to your SNES via Nintendo's Japan-only satellite system. The first two were a version of the original NES game with rejigged dungeons, and a similarly rejigged version of *LttP*. Excellent moment: having a storm descend in the latter, extinguishing bomb fuses.

Rubbishly, generic children were the stars.

3 MAJORA'S MASK (2000, N64)

Heavily focussed on the goings on of a town in a parallel dimension, beset by an angry-faced moon slowly plunging towards it. The meat of the game involved Link interacting with the people as they went about their business, solving problems and working out their routines over the three days before the world ends. Even if the save system could be a bit niggly (you had to warp back to day one each time), it's a game fashioned from mysterious, memorable, magical happenings. Excellent moment: The island that reveals itself to be a giant turtle.



As in real life, masks change you into a variety of forms.

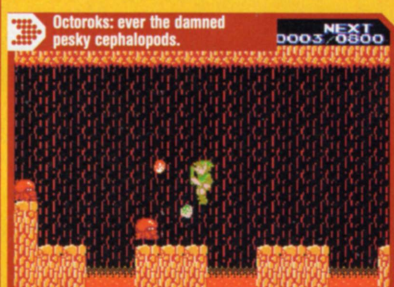
2 LINK'S AWAKENING (1994, GB)

The first game to take place away from the square bushes o' Hyrule, Link is washed ashore onto an island presided over by a giant and mysterious mountaintop egg (and some more square bushes). A brilliantly exotic atmosphere to this one, and possibly the finest soundtrack of the series. Excellent moment: Marin's achingly beautiful monologue as you sit on a sunsetty beach.

Flying Octoroks: ever the damned peskier cephalopods.

1 ADVENTURE OF LINK (1987, FDS/NES)

Traditionally the odd one out – *Zelda 2* was a mostly sidescrolling platform game, in which Link, shockingly, could jump. It has a reputation it doesn't deserve, however, as it's a fine game in its own right. It was the first *Zelda* game to feature villages, and, even though it wasn't quite as complicatedly designed, the new viewpoint makes it a fair bit more atmospheric than the original. Excellent moment: the villager who amusingly informs you, "I AM ERROR."



Octoroks: ever the damned pesky cephalopods.

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REVIEWS

SELECT YOUR STAR!

✔EVERY GAME ✔EVERY FORMAT ✔EVERY MONTH

REVIEWS ED

KATH BRICE

It's been a nightmare getting everything done this issue and it's all down to a game that I had feared might be a bit weak; *Wii Sports*. It's great fun. Still, somehow we've managed to review our first of the PS3's US launch games – *Resistance: Fall Of Man*, which is a more than respectable first shooter for the console, and the speedy *Ridge Racer 7*. Plus we've been playing DS lovelies *Yoshi's Island 2* and *Mario: March Of The Minis*, and the PSP *SmackDown! Vs RAW*.

Brilliant stuff. More brilliant than learning that the controversy over *Rule Of Rose* has caused its publishers to back out of releasing it over here just a few days after Rob finished playing it. At least you'll be able to see this so-called evil game for yourself...

Anyway, we're off to see in the New Year...with a game of Wii golf. See you next month.

SELECT YOUR REVIEWER!

REX GOD
Amateur palaeontologist Jes was born to play *Yoshi's Island DS*, or so he reckons. He also bagged *Excite Truck*.
JES

DIRTY BOY
Horror buff Rob leapt on *Rule of Rose*, as well as relieving his Ashes blues by thumping the Aussies in *Cricket 07*...
ROB

REVIEWER OF STEEL
A man with muscles the size of prize-winning melons is always the sensible choice for *SmackDown!*
JOEL

ALTON TOWER
The rector of retro swaps out his SNES pad for some DS lovin' with *March of the Minis* and *Cooking Mama*.
ADAM

RESISTANCE FIGHTER
PS3 expert Dan was one of the first gamers in the world to finish *Resistance*, so who better to review it?
DAN

WHO ARE THESE FELLAS?

They're both variants of the evil Chimera from *Resistance: Fall of Man*. The freakazoid on the left is a Hybrid, while the even uglier git on the right is a Menial. Hybrids are among the most dangerous forms of Chimera, the result of hideous biological mutations with unfortunate humans. Menials are your bog-standard grunts – they're cannon fodder, basically.

BEST MOVES?

Since Hybrids share talents from both species, they're equally at home wielding human *and* Chimera weaponry. Get up close and you'll also find they have a vicious melee attack – as well as *very* bad breath. Menials, on the other claw, are very good at *dying* like the wusses they are.

BEST MOMENTS?

It's gotta be when they leap out at you – even five hours into the game you'll have heart palpitations when a surprise ambush from the Chimera catches you unawares. Boy, are these SOBs hard to take down...

PAGE 62

Donkey Kong: The villain of the piece. Falls head over heels in love with Pauline (*not* the one from EastEnders) and kidnaps her. Alas, Pauline fancies Mario and so a whole heap o' trouble kicks off...

Fireball Mario: Fourth in our list of top Mario alter-egos (behind cape, raccoon and frog), this flaming plumber is nevertheless tops for offing enemies.

Clockwork Peach: A mechanical copy of everyone's fave gaming babe (well, unless you've a penchant for her sis Daisy instead). Phwoar...

Toad: Resident of the Mushroom Kingdom and stalker of Peach, this affable servant is always a *fungi* to be around. Arf.

Shy Guy: Shy? This mercenary wears a Jason Voorhees mask and packs an extremely sharp trident! Run awaaay!

PAGE 60

HOW GM'S REVIEWS WORK

SCORES EXPLAINED

90%+ Miss one of these and there's probably something wrong with your brain.

80-89% A solid and enjoyable game with some moments of brilliance.

70-79% Respectable enough, but not as much fun as it should have been.

60-69% Could have been pretty decent if it wasn't for some irritating flaws.

GM GUARANTEE

ONLY GAMESMASTER has reviews you can trust. This is why...

- We play and judge games on every format.
- We only review finished code.
- We only use expert, experienced game players.
- We're 100% independent.
- We want to ensure you never buy a duff game!

1. GOLD AWARD
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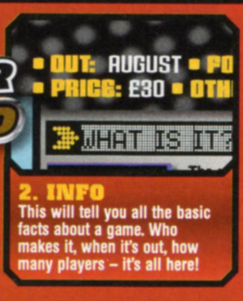

2. INFO
This will tell you all the basic facts about a game. Who makes it, when it's out, how many players – it's all here!

WHAT IS IT?
JAWS UNLEASHED
The game of the film... Except it's not, really.
• Boss battles including killer whales and giant squid.
• Special 'dismemberment ensing'

3. WHAT IS IT?
A very brief, simple description of the game in its most basic, easily digestible form, with some hard facts.

4. IN GAME CLIP
Four screens of a particular sequence in a game. This shows you how the game actually plays.

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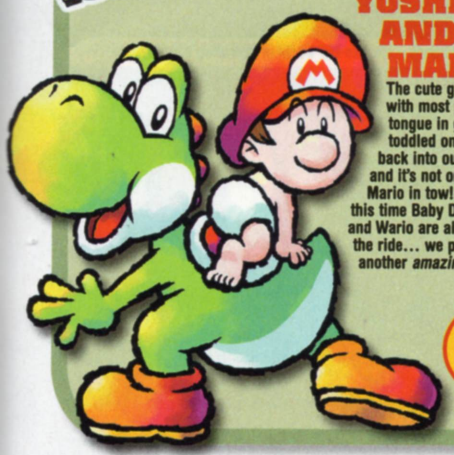
YOSHI'S ISLAND DS



YOSHI AND MARIO

The cute green dino with most probing tongue in gaming has toddled onto DS and back into our hearts – and it's not only baby Mario in tow! No siree, this time Baby DK, Peach and Wario are also along for the ride... we predict another *amazing* adventure.

PAGE 64

TONY SOPRANO

He's got more of a supporting role in the game than we'd have liked, but the daddy of mob bosses is still great value for money. A likeable, tormented anti-hero – we still root for him even when he's offing innocent people. Yes, he's *that* great.

PAGE 65

ERAGON

This fine looking slip of a lad is set to kick Harry Potter into touch when it comes to teen heroes. A young farmhand who suddenly discovers he's destined to ride dragons and save his world, think of him as Alex Stormbreaker meets Frodo Baggins. Wowza.

PAGE 65

RIDGE RACER 7

Ridge Racer doesn't go in for all that officially licensed cars nonsense, which presumably means Namco could choose to smash them up if they could actually be arsed – but still they simply bounce off rocks like it was 1990. Why Namco, why?

PAGE 68

DR STILES

Rookie Dr Stiles has just graduated from medical school when he's faced with crisis after crisis at Hope Hospital. Can our dishy doc save his patients, clamber up the career ladder *and* pull all those fit nurses? With the Wii controller in our hands, it can only end in disaster...

PAGE 77

TRAUMA CENTER SECOND OPINION

JENNIFER

A dirty, filthy, unlucky girl (well, that's what the Aristocracy of the Red Crayon call her anyway), poor Jenny is a recently orphaned young lady who's about to get a terribly nasty surprise. So nasty in fact, that the game's just been banned in the UK! Blimey!

PAGE 74

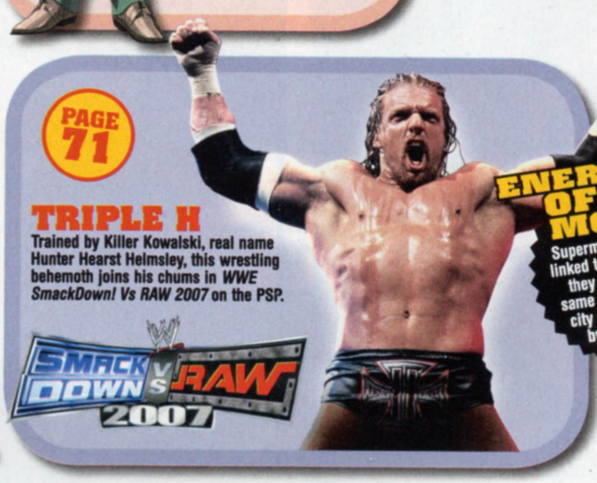
KIDNAP OF THE MONTH

Rose's heroine Jennifer is buried alive, gagged, blindfolded, doused in 'liquids' and locked in the 'Filth Room'. Unpleasant...

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS

He's the buck-toothed sponge who's taken the kiddie's world by storm (as well as relaunching the flagging career of Rob's dad, David Hasselhoff). Word on the street is that he also enjoy wearing Bikini Bottoms... oh, he *lives* there? Our mistake.

PAGE 78



TRIPLE H

Trained by Killer Kowalski, real name Hunter Hearst Helmsley, this wrestling behemoth joins his chums in *WWE SmackDown! Vs RAW 2007* on the PSP.

PAGE 71

ENERGY BAR OF THE MONTH

Superman is so closely linked to Metropolis that they even share the same health bar! If the city gets trashed, it's bye bye Supes...

SUPERMAN

The Man of Steel has been taking time out from planet Earth, bathing in those cosmic rays while sipping a Pina Colada. Now, he's returned only to find Lex Luther is up to his old tricks and old beau Lois has given birth to a sprog. Cue much super angst!

PAGE 79

10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HOW WE RATE OUR GAMES

50-59% Played worse, but we've certainly played better. Average at best.

40-49% There is a game here – but you'll have your work cut out finding it.

30-39% Ever had the squits and vomiting at the same time? Same thing.

20-29% As much fun as picking someone else's scabs.

10-19% Lock the door, get a bucket ready and feel the shame wash over you.

0-9% Some people are just sick.

5. FORMAT BAR
What consoles the game has been made for. We always try to test the game on as many formats as possible.

6. OTHER FORMATS
Either interesting alternatives or how the same game plays on other formats.

7. GM LOVES/GM HATES
A brief summary of what we liked about the game, and what we didn't.

8. THE SCORES
A complete breakdown of the game. How does it look? How well does it play and how long will you be playing it for?

9. OVERALL
This will tell you if it's worth buying or not. Bear in mind that the final score is not an average of the other scores.

10. SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
Is there's a similar game that's better? Is there a more interesting game out before it?

OUT: MARCH 07 (UK) • **FORMAT:** PS3 • **PRICE:** TBC • **PUBLISHER:** SONY • **DEVELOPER:** INSOMNIAC
ONLINE: YES • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE • **WEB:** WWW.PLAYB3YOND.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-40 ONLINE

PS3

WHAT IS IT?

First-person shooter set in a world where WW2 didn't happen. But then Chimera arrive...

- Entertainingly varied weapons
- 40-player online fun

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Manchester plays host to an epic running battle between UK troops and the aliens – it's like the world is exploding around you.

RESISTANCE FALL OF MAN

The best game on PS3 – but is it a worthy rival to *Halo*?

Resistance, as it turns out, *is* futile. Sony's shooter might be a polished fusion of first-person shooter clichés, but after initial doubts, you'll start to relish the difficulty, master the complex weaponry and lose yourself in the engrossing plot. Before you know it, you're furiously clutching the pad, rifle-slapping fallen aliens in the face and yelling "Want some do you? *Huh?*" – while playing arguably the best launch game on PS3.

Insomniac's FPS borrows heavily from *Halo*, *Half-Life 2* and *Call of Duty*. You've seen almost every element before – constant squad chatter, boss battles, vehicles, vicious aliens, regenerating energy bars – but rarely all together, or executed with such quality. Aliens look *evil*, moving in packs, taking cover and exhibiting dogged AI; while slow-mo sniper shots just feel *right* – often flipping foes clean off their feet. Death animations could be more exaggerated, but it feels so tight, and satisfying, you don't even notice the lack of pad rumble.

ALIEN NATION

The plot fuses two creaky concepts – World War 2 and aliens – in novel unity, with the secrets of the alien takeover gruesomely drip-fed, as our hero suffers a mysterious transformation. As the plot thickens, so does your resolve for revenge, as the environments twist further from gritty, real world, locations like, er, Bristol and Nottingham, into gnarled alien hives. The pacing is equally sublime – lurching from intense open-

THE PLOT

The alien menace, known as the Chimera, were first found in Russia but soon swept over the globe crushing all in sight.

The Chimera's sinister secret weapons are these tiny bugs, which crawl into human's ears and mouths to infect them. Ugh.

The hero, Nathan Hale, gets infected early in the game, but doesn't seem to get affected like normal people.

The Chimera 'harvest' fallen humans using these floating Carriers – a bit like in *War of the Worlds*.

BEST BIT!

Press R3 to snipe, squeeze L2 to enter the slow motion focus mode, and squeeze R2 to literally blow aliens off their feet – it's hugely satisfying.

SHAKE AND ATTACK

The Menial class Chimeras don't carry weapons, but when they get close, they'll attack. You need to shake the SixAxis pad to smash them loose – it's real nail-biting stuff.

The enemy leap at you from some distance – waggle like mad to break free.

MEET THE CHIMERA

The Chimera come in all shapes and sizes, with the most aggressive, heavily armed and powerful foes saved until the end. Typically, they've all got weak spots unique to specific weapons. The character design is impressively grotesque, so you'll take real pleasure in snuffing them out and scoring one back for mankind.

Hybrids are the standard grunts and pack heat-seeking Bullseye rifles – they hunt in packs.

Howlers are a quadrupled strain of Chimera with ultra-strong leather hides.

Titans are the ultimate form of Chimera mutation and pack heavy weaponry.

Gray Jacks are hybrids that have outgrown their diseased bodies.

BEST BOMB

The Hedgehog grenades (pictured right) are impressive, with full 360° spike fire, but the Air Fuel grenades are possibly the most powerful, and satisfying, hand thrown weapons in FPS history. They're best used to scorch rampant packs of Leapers.

The weapons are immensely entertaining in *Resistance*.

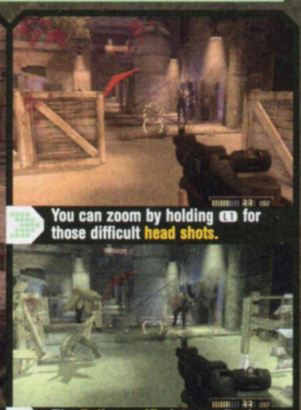
WEAPONS

As you'd expect of the team behind *Ratchet and Clank*, the weapons are innovative, tactical and hugely explosive. There are eight in total, each with primary (R1) and secondary fire (L1).

The standard carbine rifle features a pump action grenade secondary fire.

The carbine is the best all round weapon – lethal in focused bursts.

One of the more ingenious weapons is the grenade blaster, which plops giant bubbles into the air which can be exploded from a remote distance.



You can zoom by holding L1 for those difficult head shots.

The Bullseye rifle lets you 'tag' enemies and shoot around corners.

"*RESISTANCE* IS ONE OF THE FINEST LAUNCH GAMES IN CONSOLE HISTORY"

world squad battles against hundreds of aliens, to claustrophobic spotlit corridors, and jaw-dropping one-on-one boss fights. Decent, if underused, vehicle sections break up the action, with *Halo*-style tank and buggy driving.

The weapons are diverse, tactical and visually distinct, with perfect spot-effects – from the satisfying whistle before a gas grenade explodes clearing half a screen of aliens, or the 'click' as you tag a foe and pump him full of Bullseye homing bullets tucked safely behind cover. Each weapon is perfect for different aliens but, brilliantly, there's always an alternative tactic if ammo runs low. For example, you could lob a 360° spike-firing hedgehog grenade into a crowded room and snipe the survivors, or charge in with a shotgun while dashing intelligently between cover. Weapons are drip-fed, so you never get bored, and aliens constantly evolve and alter tactics, so you never feel settled.

E.T. GO HOME

While *Call of Duty 3* is more chaotic and, arguably, more atmospheric, *Resistance* is purer and more tactical – like *TimeSplitters*. Personally, we prefer its punchy, consistent approach. *Call of Duty* can feel a bit like spray painting distant shadows until they fade, while *Resistance* is more like popping balloons. Problems? The limp ending, vague feeling you've seen it all before and lack of online co-op – plus a few over-long trudging bits. It lacks the breathtaking 'rules have changed' impact of something like *Halo* – like when you first tackled the Silent Cartographer level, or rode the Warthog buggy – but it's still one of the finest launch games in console history, and online it's an absolute treat. Think PS3 is all hot air? *Resistance* shatters the cliché. And then some. GM

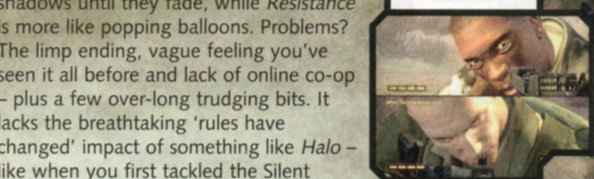
Other Formats

Alternatives on other consoles:

PS3	Call of Duty 3	87%
PS2	TimeSplitters 2	92%
XBOX	Halo 2	95%

CO-OP PLAY

The screen splits horizontally, with one player as hero Hale, and the other as a generic squad partner...



You can't shoot each other, so the focus is flanking movements and providing cover.

You can't play online co-op, but the offline game adds an extra dimension to the story mode.

The standard melee attack is quite powerful and a useful tactic in online play.

The game passes the next-gen physics test – watch tin cans bounce under gun fire.

In single-player, you drive the vehicle while your AI buddy lays down fire.

JUDGEMENT

DAN

GM LOVES

- The diverse weaponry, solid visuals and tactical depth
- The steep difficulty and engaging plot
- 40-player online deathmatches

GM HATES

- The clichéd 'face hugger-style' rip-off aliens
- The odd wonky British accent
- The occasionally grey and dreary building

GRAPHICS 80%

A bit dark and depressing, but set-pieces fizz with ambient detail.

GAMEPLAY 85%

Nothing too innovative for FPS fans, but superbly executed.

LIFESPAN 80%

The main game takes about 10-15 hours; online games could last years.

OVERALL

89%

A roll call of superbly executed FPS clichés fuelled by an engaging plot.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

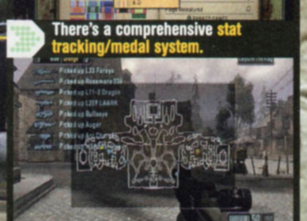
BETTER THAN: ..... Call of Duty 3, 87%
WORSE THAN: ..... Halo, 96%
WAIT FOR: ..... Halo 3 (Nov 2007)
BEST PRICE: ..... £49.99 (Import)

40 PLAYER ONLINE WAR!

Resistance supports a massive 40 players online, and even in our most furious battles, we've seen no slowdown. With full mic support, it's a worthy rival to multi-player *Halo 2*.

Online play features exclusive levels, like this sprawling aircraft carrier.

There's a comprehensive stat tracking/medal system.



You can flip the radar on/off, and customise almost all options.

There's the usual range of team and solo games – and it's easy to use.

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: DS • PRICE: £29.99
DEVELOPER: ARTOON • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO • ONLINE: NO
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.NINTENDO.COM • PLAYERS: 1

DS

WHAT IS IT?

Old-school baby-ferrying platforming. With dinosaurs!

- Four babies with abilities – Mario, Peach, Wario, and Donkey Kong
- Morph into several vehicles

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Yoshi's world is disarmingly beautiful – all crayon-drawn backdrops and primary colours. Aaah!

TWO TONE

The dual screens of the DS are used well, allowing for an expanded playing area that the developers have really taken advantage of. They also show maddening unreachable areas, such as here – how does DK get those coins on the right? – prompting further exploration...

Sometimes the playing area shifts to the top screen, which is momentarily distracting. Naturally, Yoshi can shoot his eggs from top screen to bottom screen or vice versa. Plucky lil' fella, eh?

YOSHI'S ISLAND DS

Meet the new Yoshi, same as the old Yoshi...

The last great hurrah of the SNES, *Yoshi's Island*, lives on in the form of *Super Mario Advance 3* on the GBA, preserved for gaming posterity forever.

And, as you probably know, it's amazing, so we were all terribly excited when our review copy of *Yoshi's Island DS* turned up. And you know what? It's almost exactly the same as its predecessor.

EGG-CITING

The wonderful hand-drawn quality of the graphics, the eating/egg-shooting mechanics, the flutter jump, the ability to transform into vehicles... it's all here. And that makes the game *very* familiar. What it doesn't do, however, is detract from how *fun* it all is – and the well-judged new additions add a further layer of enjoyment. The new babies you get to carry all have their own abilities (meaning revisiting levels to see everything is a must) – our favourite being Peach, who uses her parasol to catch gusts of wind.

Sadly, the game doesn't really use the DS very well (touch screen support is notably lacking), although the two screens allow for more sprawling and inventive levels, and you can spy both above and below you to see those unreachable-as-yet areas. For all its flaws, though, this is tip-top platforming that'll charm your pants right off. GM

"IT'LL CHARM YOUR PANTS RIGHT OFF"

Other Formats

The closest alternative on your consoles:

GBA	Super Mario Advance 3	91%
CUBE	Super Mario Sunshine	95%
PSP	Daxter	89%

Hurl bum-eggs at the balloons to reveal the fleshy nose of doom!

BEST BIT!

It's got to be the beautiful simplicity of hurling Yoshi's arse-yolks around. Frankly, it never gets boring. Ever.

JUDGEMENT

JBS

GM LOVES

- The lovely hand-drawn look
- Yoshi's little straining noise when he jumps
- The new babies

GM HATES

- How familiar it all is
- Baby Wario's abilites are a bit hit-and-miss
- No multi-player mode

GRAPHICS 90%
Gloriously crayoned-in 2D platforming. Both retro *and* stylish.

GAMEPLAY 84%
Classic Nintendo platforming fun, with added new bits.

LIFESPAN 86%
A surprisingly meaty single-player game, full of secrets.

OVERALL

83%

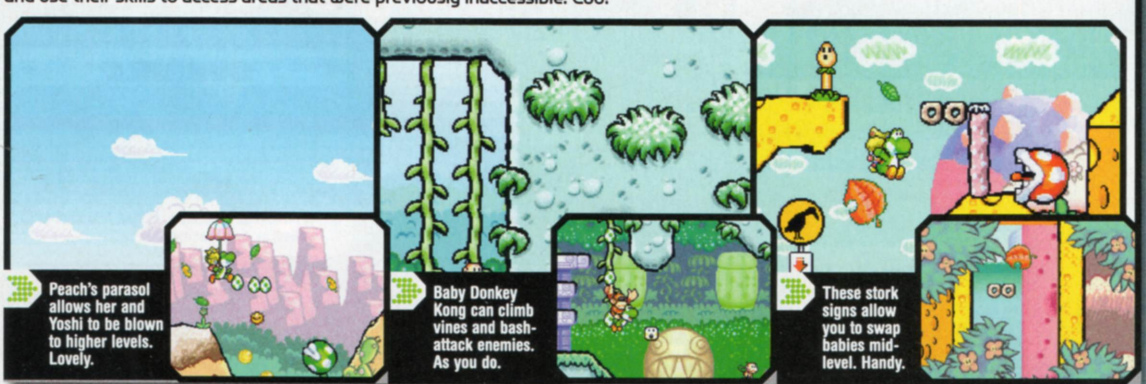
Touched with that Nintendo genius, but it's a very familiar kind of genius.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:.....Over the Hedge , 65%
WORSE THAN:.....New Super Mario Bros, 90%
WAIT FOR:.....Nothing
BEST PRICE:.....£24.99, amazon.co.uk

BABIES!

There are four babies to ferry around, and each has his or her own ability. Once you've 'opened up' a baby, you'll be able to revisit levels and use their skills to access areas that were previously inaccessible. Coo!



Peach's parasol allows her and Yoshi to be blown to higher levels. Lovely.

Baby Donkey Kong can climb vines and bash-attack enemies. As you do.

These stork signs allow you to swap babies mid-level. Handy.

■ OUT: NOW ■ FORMAT: PS2 ■ PRICE: £34.99
■ DEVELOPER: STORMFRONT ■ PUBLISHER: VIVENDI ■ ONLINE: NO ■ OTHER FORMATS: DS, GBA, PC, PSP, XBOX 360, XBOX ■ WEB: WWW.ERAGONGAME.COM ■ PLAYERS: 1-2

eragon™

It's no *Lord of the Rings* – more 'bored of the wings'...

FLY ME!

Flying Saphira the dragon is simple and fun. She can attack with a tail-stab and even pull her wings in and boost. Clever gal.

Eragon, perched on Saphira's back, can fire arrows at enemies.

Hit Ⓐ and Saphira braces for impact. Handy for mid-air collisions.

We haven't seen the Eragon film yet, but we hope it's a bit more interesting than this. A relentless hack-and-slasher in the style of Stormfront's own *The Two Towers*, it simply gets too repetitive to really engage properly.

Which isn't to say that the fighting isn't much cop – being able to dodge, grapple and use finishing moves means there's an element of subtlety and strategy here, it's just that the constant waves of enemies mean whatever sword-happy joy you might glean from the game gets lost in a stream of tiresome sword-waving opponents.

There's magic, too, which you can only use at pre-determined points, but it still adds an illusion of choice, and there are flying levels where our hero mounts his dragon steed, Saphira, for a bit of swooping action, which provides a welcome respite.

Perhaps the best thing about the game is the co-operative element; with two players going at it the constant combat becomes less tiresome and more interesting. Nevertheless, *Eragon*, while offering plenty of fantasy thrills is never as exciting as it should be, and it's a little too tedious.

GM

BEST BIT!

Build your Fury Meter up and press both analogue sticks to go into a blinding rage!

It doesn't last long, though, but while it does those fights are a bit more enjoyable.

JUDGEMENT

JES

GRAPHICS 78%
Nicely animated if overly brown. But that didn't hurt *Twilight Princess*, eh?

GAMEPLAY 54%
Relentless combat enlivened by dragon-controlling fun.

LIFESPAN 36%
Secrets to find help out, but it's not the biggest game ever made.

OVERALL
61%
Best played with a friend, as it's too repetitive otherwise. Nice dragon, though.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: Ninety-Nine Nights, 60%
WORSE THAN: Return of the King, 86%
WAIT FOR: WoW: Burning Crusade
BEST PRICE: £25.99, amazon.co.uk

■ OUT: NOW ■ FORMAT: PS2 ■ PRICE: £29.99 ■ OTHER FORMATS: XBOX 360 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ ONLINE: NO

THE Sopranos
Road to Respect

A game to sleep with the fishes...

First things first: it's not a total disaster. In fact, this isn't too bad in some respects.

Well, in one respect, specifically – the voice acting, performed by most of the cast of the TV show, is spot-on, conveying some of the humour and the menace that *The Sopranos* is known for. (Also, be warned – this is very violent and full of pottymouthing.) Otherwise, this is mostly a sequence of cut-scenes interspersed with plenty of fighting and a conversational system that lets you choose the manner of your response. As such, most of the time it feels like you're watching the game rather than playing it , and the fighting itself is often highly repetitive.

This is definitely one for fans only – and even the most undemanding *Sopranos* aficianado will find it entertaining in fits and starts at best.

GM

FIGHT STUFF

There are loads of different combat moves, but pulling them off can be tricky. Use Circle to grapple an enemy and then punch them to the floor – this is where the fun stuff happens.

When prompted, hit the D-pad to do a combo. Different directions do different moves.

Then move the left analogue stick down or around – it's all a bit complicated.

WORST BIT!

The constant fighting – it gets very tiresome after a while, although there's a good variety of brutal attacks. Not that we condone that kind of thing, of course.

JUDGEMENT

JES

GRAPHICS 54%
Renditions of the main cast are extremely variable – otherwise, average.

GAMEPLAY 47%
Most of the time you're following cut-scenes and then having a fight.

LIFESPAN 48%
You'll get to the end in a few short hours.

OVERALL
46%
It's not really much of a game, unless you really like watching cut-scenes and fighting.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: Desperate Housewives
WORSE THAN: Reservoir Dogs, 68%
WAIT FOR: The season 6 DVD set
BEST PRICE: £25.99, amazon.co.uk

REVIEW

OUT: FEB 07 • **FORMAT:** Wii • **PRICE:** £39.99
DEVELOPER: MONSTER STUDIOS • **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO • **ONLINE:** NO • **SPECIAL:** CAN USE GT PRO SERIES STEERING WHEEL • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE • **WEB:** WWW.WIIMOVEYOU.CO.UK • **PLAYERS:** 1-2

Wii

WHAT IS IT?

High-speed racing with crazy jumps and plenty of stunts.

- Tilt the Wii controller to steer
- Deform terrain to create huge jumps

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Ready... set... go! It's pedal to the metal for hair-raising speed. Vroooom!

EXCITE TRUCK™

Next-gen genius or Nintendo novelty?

You can boost at any time, the only regulator being an easy-to-overheat engine.

TILT ME!

You hold the remote side-on and simply tilt it up and down at the ends to turn. Takes a bit of getting used to but it works well.

You can also use the steering wheel that comes free with Ubisoft's *GT Pro Series* – it also works splendidly.

Hit any direction on the D-pad to boost.

Excite Truck is... good fun. Those expecting a worthy successor to *Excitebike 64* and *Wave Race* will be disappointed, as this is ultimately short-lived and a little shallow, but it's fast, the controls work well and the **emphasis on racking up stars as well as winning offers a distinct challenge.**

Each track requires you to score a number of stars, and these are gained for doings things like catching big air, smashing opponents aside, drifting, and sailing through mid-air rings. As such, not just perfect driving will see you through – you've got to pull tricks and perform all manner of other manoeuvres. It's a great idea and it works well.

It's blindingly fast, too, and even if it looks like a third-party GameCube game, novelties such as hitting icons to deform the terrain (to reveal rings, create enormous jumps or 'truck throw' opponents, which scores stars) make this arguably more than your average racer.

But it feels a little rushed, somehow – for instance, there's only two player support and you can see off the main championship in a day – and while, at times, the sheer speed and spectacle raise the old neck-hairs, *Excite Truck* burns itself out far too soon. GM

Other Formats

Or try these:

PS2	ATV Offroad Fury 2	78%
CUBE	Wave Race: Blue Storm	90%
XBOX	Quantum Redshift	79%

BEST BIT!

Deforming the terrain to make a huge jump. then boosting off the top – wooooaaaaah!

Then tilting the controller so you land with all four wheels on the ground – instant boost!

STAR STRUCK

It's not just about winning – you need to rack up a certain amount of stars to progress. Here's how you do it...

Smack into an opponent for a 'Super Truck Smash'!

Hold the 1 button and waggle the remote to spin in mid-air.

Tricky, this – fly through rings and get a star for each.

Weave your way through woods for a 'Super Tree Run.'

Drifting successfully around corners also nets you stars.

Boost off a jump to catch big air – yep, more stars!

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES

- The sheer speed – it's mental!
- The controls really work!
- The star system is nicely implemented

GM HATES

- Looks a bit rough unless you've got decent cables
- Far too short-lived
- Rubbish unavoidable tutorials

GRAPHICS 70%
Sacrifices detail for speed, which is fair enough, but it looks dated already.

GAMEPLAY 80%
Skin-of-the-teeth racing with plenty of scope for stunts and showing off.

LIFESPAN 54%
Great to revisit for thrill-burst races, but it burns out far too soon.

OVERALL

74%

Brilliantly entertaining (and occasionally frustrating) while it lasts, but it's short.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... HGRR, 55%
WORSE THAN: ..... 1080 Avalanche, 90%
WAIT FOR: ..... MotorStorm (PS3, March)
BEST PRICE: ..... £34.99, amazon.co.uk

- OUT: NOW
- FORMAT: DS
- PUBLISHER: 505 GAMES
- PRICE: £24.99
- DEVELOPER: OFFICE CREATE
- ONLINE: NO
- OTHER FORMATS: NONE
- WEB: WWW.MAJESCOENTERTAINMENT.COM

DS

cooking mama

Body armour's so last year – try an apron...

Cooking is, of course, one of the better ideas for stylus-based play, but it'd need a few tweaks to make it properly game-worthy. Dangerous appliances in breach of the Three Laws of Robotics, for instance, or poltergeist-possessed utensils in need of a good duel.

Cooking Mama sadly keeps things at a domestic level throughout. You've a steadily unlockable range of recipes to make, each one broken down into mini-games. Fried rice, for instance, involves: slicing onions, breaking eggs, stirring a bowl, coating a pan with lard and so on.

It's curiously compulsive for a short while, but consider the following: you're not playing a fun, well-designed game. You are, in fact, cooking food *you can never eat*, under the gaze of a lady only capable of saying *about four things*. Stick with *WarioWare*, we reckon.

GM

PAN PEOPLE

Cooking Mama isn't completely unappealing – the natural narrative of cooking and steady stockpiling of medals gives it a weird sort of appeal...

The ingredient indications slowly fade into view, suggesting visual impairment.

BEST BIT!

Pan-frying's the best game, with you obeying the scrolling *DDR*-ish bar.

JUDGEMENT

ADAM

GRAPHICS 35%
Cute and simplistic, calling to mind *WarioWare's* trademark iconography.

GAMEPLAY 36%
Simple actions, where technique and depth are almost irrelevant.

LIFESPAN 80%
In all fairness, there are dozens of recipes. But, y'know, that's all there is.

OVERALL

56%

Cheerful stuff, with questionable challenge and, sadly, questionable point.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Actually having to cook
WORSE THAN: WarioWare: Touched, 90%
WAIT FOR: Cooking Mama: Cook Off (Wii, '07)
BEST PRICE: ..... £17.99, gameplay.co.uk

- OUT: NOW
- FORMAT: PSP
- PRICE: £34.99
- PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
- DEVELOPER: ELECTRONIC ARTS CANADA
- ONLINE: YES
- OTHER FORMATS: NONE

MEDAL OF HONOR HEROES

Small but deadly – for your eyes and your patience!

There are many things that you can't see but they can hurt you: germs, radiation and ghosts. Grenades aren't normally on that list, but in *MoH: Heroes*, like a spectral suicide bomber, you can't see them and they can blow you up through walls.

The problem is simple. First-person shooters don't work very well on smallish screens where too few buttons and only one thumbstick make even a simplified shooter like this clumsy. So you squint, aiming but missing a millimetre-high Nazi as your crosshairs twirl like beered-up ballroom dancers.

The game itself is solid, but you do wonder why EA didn't try the same approach as *Killzone: Liberation* and go top-down rather than hitting the same problem head on. And why is it so short? Sure, the online stuff is great, but we'd expected a bit more.

GM

Incredibly annoyingly, even a headshot takes three rounds to kill someone.

TAC-TRICKS

Tactics aren't really something you expect to need in any *Medal of Honor* but a combination of the bullet-hunting AI, cramped spaces and the controls that make leaning and shooting tricky make this frantic stuff.

Want to avoid getting shot to death? Then you'd best get behind some cover.

BEST BIT!

32 players online and up to eight with ad hoc Wi-Fi? This is what we want more of!

JUDGEMENT

ALEX

GRAPHICS 79%
Petite but polished with a good degree of variety in the levels.

GAMEPLAY 72%
Standard brainless Nazi blasting but with some nasty controls.

LIFESPAN 57%
Short unless you want to play Skirmish or can go online.

OVERALL

70%

The console version is captured perfectly but is that really a good thing on handheld?

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Coded Arms, 52%
WORSE THAN: ..... Call Of Duty 3, 87%
WAIT FOR: ..... Brothers In Arms
BEST PRICE: ..... £24.99 Amazon.co.uk

REVIEW

OUT: MARCH 07 (UK), NOW (JAPAN AND US) ■ **FORMAT:** PLAYSTATION 3 ■ **PRICE:** $59.99
DEVELOPER: NAMCO BANDAI ■ **PUBLISHER:** NAMCO BANDAI ■ **ONLINE:** YES
OTHER FORMATS: NONE ■ **WEB:** WWW.NAMCO.COM ■ **PLAYERS:** 1-14

WHAT IS IT?

Ridge Racer arrives on PS3, ready to work it's old magic for Sony's new console.

- 13 massive Grand Prix
- Infinite car mods
- Online racing

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Blistering straights lock together hair-raising sideways-sliding corners. Faster than light, smoother than silk.

ONLINE!

A ticker tape of real opponents making real victories scrolls along the base of the screen and you'll spend as much time studying your online stats as you will racing your rivals.

You want modes? *Ridge 7* has got 'em. It makes 360 *Ridge 6* look withered and weak.

Racing matched opponents is a breeze. And studying reams of race results is mad fun.

RIDGE RACER 7™

Buffed to perfection, gorgeous to play, fake like plastic...

Problem with all this 'power of PlayStation 3' stuff is that if you *want* the game to look arcadey and plastic then all the power in the world isn't going to make it onto the screen. The cars look shiny. The sky is blue and the flocks of birds flap and fly like birds do. But is *Ridge 7* 'real'? Like hell it is. This is the seventh in the *Ridge Racer* series and, by now, the formula is locked down like the 10 commandments.

Drifting? Check. Perfectly balanced Grand Prix structure? Word. Best *Ridge* graphics ever? You know it. And thanks to sharing some tracks from Xbox 360's *Ridge 6*, you can see the difference. 360 seems gritty. Harsh. Like they couldn't decide to go sim or spoof. PS3 looks *disinfected* in comparison, and while 360 faked it with some blurry textures PS3 is consistently, well, *fake*. Sit behind a 14-car pack and you can't help but smile as they robotically begin their drifts at exactly the same point in a corner. Jam an opponent into the scenery and the game judders both cars to resolution rather than actually bothering with any of that 'physics' muff.

And the perfect-o-polish extends pretty much all over the shop. 360's sleek, minimal menus and modes turned out to be half-arsed fillers, the real deal is here on PS3. More modes of play than you could need and a core, ever-expanding tournament mode so packed with tracks and challenge that it'll keep you busy for as long as your eyes and thumbs can endure your race to the top. And then, of course, there's some brilliant online action. So while this might be a familiar game, it's also stirring, sexy and souped-up. GM

BEST BIT!

Completing a Grand Prix then darting back to the ranking screen to see your stats surge you ahead of your rivals. The world really is watching.

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES

- The triumph of 'excitement' over 'realism'
- The absorbing, ever-expanding Grand Prix mode

GM HATES

- Nothing like real driving at all, really
- Nothing has changed gameplay-wise
- Your PS3's power is coasting with this one

GRAPHICS 80%
The best *Ridge* graphics yet, but still oh-so-fake.

GAMEPLAY 78%
Nothing new. At all. But why change a winning formula?

LIFESPAN 38%
Online play and the rankings make this a year-long challenge.

OVERALL

80%

PS3 power saps realism out of the racing – but replaces it with a slick arcade polish.

Other Formats

Alternatives on other consoles:

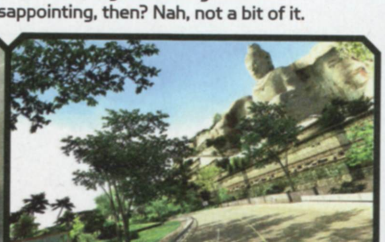
360	Project Gotham Racing 3	90%
PS2	Need for Speed: Carbon	78%
PSP	Ridge Racer 2	89%

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

"So what does it look like then"? That's the question. And... it... looks... hmm. Pretty good. But not 'PlayStation 3 good'. Not particularly 'better than 360' good. Not particularly 'next generation of games good'. Disappointing, then? Nah, not a bit of it.

PS3 gives *Ridge* a shiny sheen of next-gen perfection. 360 *Ridge* is gritty in comparison.

You haven't seen cars that glow like these. The overall effect is almost 'hyper-real'. Phwoar.



Much of the scenery seems unchanged but up close the leaves on trees show PS3's power.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Ridge Racer 6, 72%
WORSE THAN: ..... Project Gotham Racing 3 ..... 90%
WAIT FOR: ..... Gran Turismo HD
BEST PRICE: $59.99

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: NEVERSOFT • PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XB, X360, GC, PC • WEB: WWW.GUNTHEGAME.COM • PLAYERS: 1 (2-6 WI-FI)

Blowing things up is always fun and there are sticks of dynamite a-plenty here... just goes to show what a dangerous place the old west was.

GUN SHOWDOWN

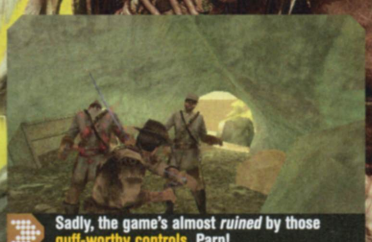
How the west was fun! Or not...

Quick-drawing Colton White saddled up for the original *Gun* game a year ago so you'd think that as quite a bit of time has passed, *Gun Showdown* on PSP might have been re-worked quite a lot. But aside from some quick play challenges and a couple of Deathmatch multi-player games, it's the same game just with new controls.

And what bad controls they are. Mainly because there are so many of them – you need to manually aim, swap weapons, quick-draw, flick between targets... then you need to do all of that while riding a horse, spurring it to go faster and jumping. Holding a button does one thing, tapping it does another.

For the most part the game looks great and little has been lost from the big console versions. The story is neat wild west stuff with gunfights on horseback and missions that take place during every western cliché you can imagine. Shoot outs take place on steamboats, trains and in saloons and each mission gives you a list of objectives – normally things to find or places to get to in one piece. It just a shame the biggest challenge is conquering the controls and trying not to ride your horse into a rock or fire a round of ammo at the sky.

GM



Sadly, the game's almost *ruined* by those guff-worthy controls. Parp!

JUDGEMENT — KATH

GRAPHICS 34%
It's an impressive looking game, although the camera shows up glitches.

GAMEPLAY 58%
Everything is largely the same as the original *Gun* game.

LIFESPAN 30%
There's a lot in it with a long story mode, challenges and multi-player.

OVERALL

59%

A once enjoyable wild west shooter gone bad on the PSP.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... 50 Cent
WORSE THAN: ..... Red Dead Revolver
WAIT FOR: ..... Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops (March 2007)
BEST PRICE: ..... £27.50, www.foxy.co.uk

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: EA • PUBLISHER: EA • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PC • WEBSITE: WWW.UK.EA.COM • PLAYERS: 1-2

The picture-in-picture cam helps you decide when to risk a run...

CRICKET 07

Out for a duck or digging in for a century?

Cricket isn't exactly the most exciting of sports and EA has always managed to capture that spirit in its tedious conversions.

Fair do's though – this season they've totally overhauled things and the result is the first half-decent cricket videogame since Brian Lara ruled supreme in the late nineties.

Cleverly, batting now involves using the right analogue, sorry, *Century Stick*, to shape your strokes, and it works a treat. Once you've got your timing spot on (head over to nets from a spot of coaching in this department) the Oval will resound to the thwack of leather upon willow as you crack Flintoff-esque boundary after boundary.

FULL TOSS

Shame bowling is a turgid as ever, sticking to the laborious and ungratifying process of trial & error/luck, plus the usual power/swing/spin gauges that don't really seems to have evolved since the days of *Graham Gooch* on Mega Drive. Ah well, at least they're getting there...

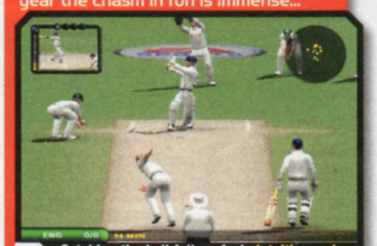
What we all really want to know is whether this game, which boasts an Ashes mode, manages to capture the blood and thunder spirit of cricketing's most famous rivalry. The answer is yes, just about.

A worthy knockabout then, and certainly an improvement on last year's effort.

GM

BAT 'N BALL

We've always preferred batting to bowling – who doesn't? – but this year the chasm in fun is immense...



Catching the ball full-on feels intuitive and satisfying. Pad rumbles too.

Bowling still feels way too hit and miss for our liking. Iffy ball physics too.

Smacking a beefy six is tops, but we'd still plump for grabbing a prize wicket.

JUDGEMENT — ROB

GRAPHICS 76%
Superb motion capture, though the player likeness are a bit iffy.

GAMEPLAY 78%
Batting feels super slick, but dated bowling harks back to darker days.

LIFESPAN 75%
The sheer banality of the sport never fails to draw us in. Weirdly hypnotic...

OVERALL

76%

EA is hitting form – hinting at some glorious virtual cricketing summers to come.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Cricket 2005, 57%
WORSE THAN: ..... Nothing
WAIT FOR: ..... Brian Lara International Cricket 2007 (March)
BEST PRICE: ..... £29.99, Play.com

REVIEW

OUT: MARCH 1ST 07 (UK), NOW (US) • **FORMAT:** DS • **PRICE:** £29.99 • **DEVELOPER:** NST • **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO
ONLINE: WI-FI LEVEL TRADING • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE • **WEB:** WWW.MARIOVSDK.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1

DS.

WHAT IS IT?

A puzzley action game awash with personable mechanicals.

- 72 levels
- The odd obscure reference to arcades gone by

YOU'LL PLAY IT!

IN GAME CLIP: Lead wind-up dolls like a warped Moses and hurt an ape's face.

MARIO VS. DONKEY KONG 2™

MARCH OF THE MINIS

March? But don't they have wheels?

It's not often Nintendo imitate things – their well-maintained allotment at the forefront of innovation is common knowledge. (They even, technically, created the first clean dating sim in '87.) But when they *do* imitate things, the result is often memorable indeed. Sega's *Space Harrier*, for instance, provided the foundation for the magnificent *Star Fox*. And *Mario vs. DK 2* is clearly a Mushroom Kingdom riff on *Lemmings*.

But, at the same time, it's also a marvellously original sequel, doing away with all the platform action of the original. Now, the aim is to guide the automatic, helium-giggling Mini Marios to the level exits, via supervising taps and strokes of the stylus. Naturally, lots of obstacles lie in your way, from rogue DK dolls to magnetic walls to pleasingly old-school rotating flame barriers.

"IT'S SMART STUFF, AND PERFECTLY ABSORBING"

SUPER MINIO

It's smart stuff, and perfectly absorbing for its eight daintily decorated worlds. If we had a problem with the first play through, it's that the levels were slightly too easy to suss out, with only a few towards the end providing any real challenge. But getting all the Minis to the exit is only half of the game – within its wind-up chest beats a hardcore heart of high-high-highscores. Getting gold medals on each of the levels is a tough exercise, with you having to juggle the actions of many Minis and refine ideal routes. With a final boss unlockable with 40 golds, it'll keep you busy for a while.

And they've also shoehorned in a complete level editor, so you can bat designs back and forth with a mate. (Not to mention struggle against your own ingenuity – we could only get silver on a level *we* created.) It's not up there with the best puzzle games of all time, but it's good stuff regardless. GM

MINI WINNY

Lots of depth to the game, here. Hammers are placed at certain points and can be used to stun enemies, for instance, and pink blocks can be absorbed and disgorged into empty blocks elsewhere, very often in the nick of time.

You score points for chaining the evacuation of Minis from the level, and you score more points if the golden Mini's at the end of the sequence. The Piranha Plants spit out rebounding fireballs (and, interestingly, swallow them again).

BEST BIT!

Undoubtedly, it's aceing a level after an eternity of having your time trials dashed by the sterling efforts of Thwomps and Kongs.

JUDGEMENT

ADAM

GM LOVES

- The chipmunky chittering
- The return of original kidnapped woman Pauline
- The lovely FMV sequences

GM HATES

- Accidentally clicking 'Retry' instead of 'Continue' after pausing (but that's just us)
- You can't buy Mini Marios in real life

GRAPHICS 78%
Clean and colourful, with sprites drawn with lines as opposed to pixels.

GAMEPLAY 74%
Either massively sedate or fiendishly tough, depending on how you play it.

LIFESPAN 35%
A short main game, but with many hours of medal and designing time.

OVERALL

80%

Just as efficient as its clockwork nature would seem to suggest – this is splendid fun.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Puyo Pop Fever
WORSE THAN: ..... Meteos (91%)
WAIT FOR: ..... Lemmings 2 (PS3)
BEST PRICE: ..... £24.99, play.com

The boss stages have you rotating a Mini-stuffed cannon to avoid debris and shoot!

MINIS MINEM EDITMINITIONS

Designing is easy, but making a good level is tricky. Unless you want to torment your mate with an unfinishable stage, which, sadly, it won't let you do. Tsk.

Cunningly, the gold medal score is somehow calculated for you based on the design.

Extra kits let you use Toad and Peach dolls - there *is* a point to them being in the intro.

OUT: NOW • **FORMAT:** PSP • **PRICE:** £29.99
DEVELOPER: YUKE'S • **PUBLISHER:** THQ • **ONLINE:** NO • **SPECIAL:** WI-FI • **FORMAT:** PSP
OTHER FORMATS: PS2, X360 • **WEB:** www.wwe.com • **PLAYERS:** 1-4 (WI-FI)

WHAT IS IT?

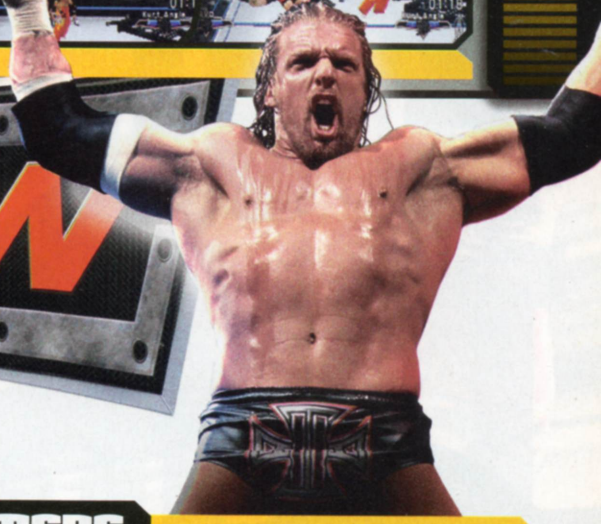
It's this year's wrestling brawler – on the PSP!

- Environmental wrestling hotspots
- Interactive crowd areas

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: The Undertaker soars... and lands on his arse. Bravo!

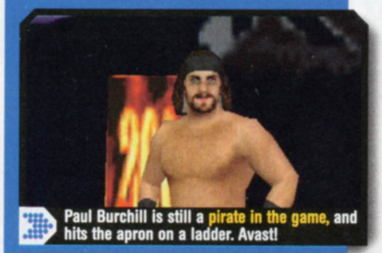
SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007



De-bigulated wrestling fun...

NEW BOYS!

Nearly all of the new gang; missing are the Great Khali and Spirit Squad.



Paul Burchill is still a pirate in the game, and hits the apron on a ladder. Avast!

And the Boogeyman does actually feed people worms. Yuck.

What with all the tweaking and prodding that's gone on in this year's *SmackDown!*, the only thing that everyone really agrees on is that the new graphics are nice. Like, seeing-the-dimple-in-Kurt-Angle's-chin nice. On the PSP, that advantage is negated – because you can't see anything. How's it going to do?

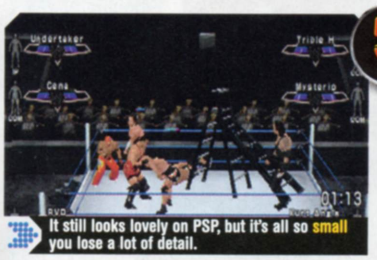
Surprisingly well, as it turns out. The biggest point of contention with purists was the right-analogue stick grappling system, which wasn't terribly precise and felt a bit woolly. Here on PSP, thanks to the lack of a stick, it's simply been transferred to the buttons and everything makes sense again.

WRASSLE HASSLE

Also slightly fixed is the difficulty – in the PS2 version, computer characters would barely let you get up after gaining the upper hand – here they'll simply slap you about a bit and then lie down. There's also the added benefit of being able to transfer saves, created wrestlers and season mode achievements between systems, so that any bus-journey counts as profitable wrestler-buffing time – but you'd have to be stupidly rich to consider buying both games rather than getting something else for your PSP. So the question is: cruiserweight with a heart of gold or merciless heavyweight beast? Sadly for the PSP, we can't resist the allure of little *SmackDown's* weightier tag-team partner.

The 'environmental hotspots' let you use all manner of ringside objects as weapons.

"THE GRAPPLING SYSTEM HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO THE BUTTONS AND MAKES SENSE"



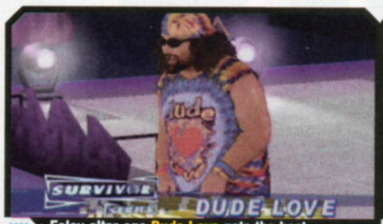
It still looks lovely on PSP, but it's all so small you lose a lot of detail.

WORST BIT!

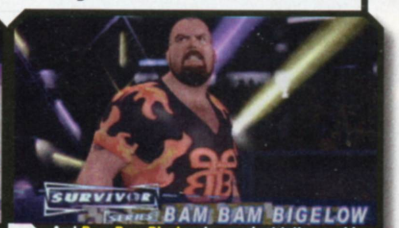
Playing in the Elimination Chamber, where enormous metal railings obscure the action about 80% of the time. Yes, well done.

OLD TIMERS

The Legends lineup's strong this year, with the likes of Jim 'The Anvil' Neidhart and Mr Perfect appearing. These two are our favourites, though.



Foley alter-ego Dude Love gets the best cheeralong intro in the game. Sweet Chin Music!



And Bam Bam Bigelow has a giant tattoo *on his head*. That must have hurt...

JUDGEMENT DAY 2007

GM LOVES

- \+ Those wrestler intros – small but still perfectly formed on PSP
- \+ The create-a-wrestler mode – perfect for on-the-bus fiddling

GM HATES

- \- Getting out of breath from running across the ring a few times
- \- The still-quite-unreasonable loading pauses

GRAPHICS 88%
Excellent for PSP, but not quite as sweaty as the bigger versions.

GAMEPLAY 76%
The stamina system's still stupid, but the context-sensitive pain is funny.

LIFESPAN 80%
You'll be in wrestler-tweaking heaven, and career offers plenty to see.

OVERALL

85%

If they could've combined the best bits of both versions, this might have got 90%...

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Rumble Roses
WORSE THAN: ..... The X360 Version, 87%
WAIT FOR: ..... Def Jam: Icon
BEST PRICE: ..... £25.99, amazon.co.uk

16+
www.pegi.info

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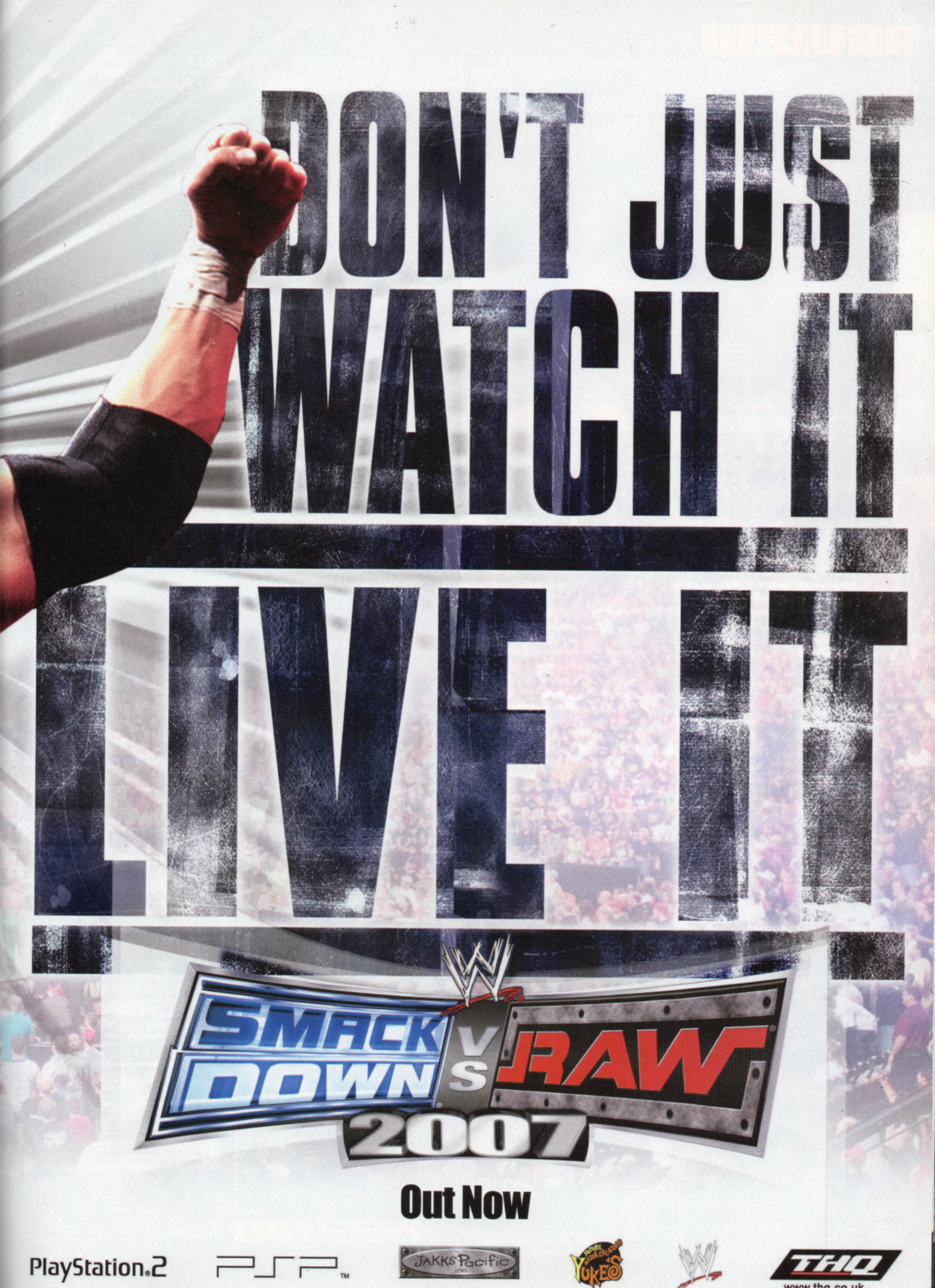
XBOX 360. XBOX LIVE


DON'T JUST
WATCH IT
LIVE IT
SMACK DOWN VS RAW
2007
Out Now
PlayStation.2
PSP
JAKKS Pacific inc.
YUKES
THQ
www.thq.co.uk

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: BLACK HOLE
PUBLISHER: DEEP SILVER/NAMCO • ONLINE: YES • OTHER FORMATS: NONE
WEB: WWW.MARKOFCHAOS.COM • PLAYERS: 1-6

PC

Like *Dawn of War*, you can zoom right into the action for a soldier's eye view of the battlefield carnage. Not that it's particularly useful for ordering units around, mind you.

WARHAMMER MARK OF CHAOS

All the goblins you can eat!

Dawn of War nailed *Warhammer 40,000*; now *Mark of Chaos* successfully translates its fantasy cousin onto the PC.

It's a more measured game than *Dawn of War*, and possibly deeper in some ways; visiting towns allows you to upgrade units and buy new ones (along with items for your heroes) and you need to choose your fighting force between each battle (a bit like designing your own army in Warhammer proper). The fighting itself is perhaps a little unsurprising, offering familiar real-time strategy, but the old noggin gets a mild workout as far as tactics are concerned – facing, placement and the formation of units, for instance, is important.

Otherwise, there's a heavy emphasis on mighty heroes (get close to an enemy and you'll duel) and the world of Warhammer is brought vividly and atmospherically to life (despite some dodgy voice acting). The two-pronged single-player game (play as either the Empire or Chaos) is complemented by some top multi-player support adding High Elves and Skaven factions.

It's a satisfying strategy affair, but ultimately *Mark of Chaos* lacks the majesty of *Medieval 2*, the drama of *Company of Heroes* or the sheer exuberance of *Dawn of War*. But it's a fine fantasy bash nonetheless. GM

The Knights of Chaos ride forth! These fellas are as hard as nails. Erk!

JUDGEMENT JES

GRAPHICS 85%
Fine battlefield splendour and well-animated units.

GAMEPLAY 79%
Lots of predictable strategy mechanics, plus army creation.

LIFESPAN 75%
Two campaigns to play through and not-bad multi-player options.

OVERALL

77%

Left behind by *Company of Heroes* and the rest, but still satisfying strategy fare.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Heroes of Might and Magic 5, 76%
WORSE THAN: ..... Dawn of War, 91%
WAIT FOR: ..... Supreme Commander
BEST PRICE: ..... £23.99, amazon.co.uk

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99 • DEV: PUNCHLINE
PUBLISHER: 505 GAMES • ONLINE: NOPE • OTHER FORMATS: NONE
WEBSITE: WWW.ATLUS.COM/RULEOFROSE • PLAYERS: 1

PS2

Rule of Rose

ルール オブ ローズ

Proves that tots really can be terrors...

D'oh! Don't chase the ghostly child and miss your bus, love!

Victorian-style survival horror is a top concept, especially when your villains are a bunch of psychotic kiddies with sadomasochistic tendencies.

Filled with gobbledigook about bucket knights, unlucky girls, aristocrat clubs and Red Crayon Royalty, there's something more than a little chilling about watching a couple of kiddies with bags over their heads seemingly stuffing a dog in a sack and mashing it to pulp with sticks. Throw in a spot of being buried alive and you're laughing – well, *screaming*, at least.

Still, we're not at all keen on the massive mansion with it's plethora of identikit hallways and doors, or the tedious backtracking and weak puzzling. Then there's the girly combat, so insipid it makes *Silent Hill* seem like *Virtua Fighter 5*.

A strong start and prevailing sense of unease suggest that *Rule of Rose* is going to be something a bit special, but the unnerving tension that's masterfully built up in the prologue is gradually eroded as Rose shuffles towards its limp climax.

Capcom's *Haunting Grounds* cornered the market in damsels in distress, helpful hounds and baroque mansions a year back, and while *Rose* is a decent dose of survival horror it doesn't quite rule the roost. GM

RULE ONE

A recommendation to all heroines – teaming up with a Lassie-like hound is a sure-fire way to foil evildoers.

Rose proves that girls can be real bitches. We already knew that. (*Easy now* – Ed)

In contrast, poor Jennifer is such a timid little thing. Aw, she's so cute.

JUDGEMENT ROB

GRAPHICS 76%
Creepy Victorian atmosphere is spine-tinglingly disconcerting.

GAMEPLAY 34%
Way too many dull courier quests, and the 'combat' is unforgivably shoddy.

LIFESPAN 58%
Once Jennifer's uncovered the mysteries you won't be coming back.

OVERALL

67%

Some genuinely disconcerting moments, but not half as scary as you might imagine.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Land of the Dead: Road to Fiddler's Green
WORSE THAN: ..... Haunting Ground, 88%
WAIT FOR: ..... Resident Evil 5 (2008)
BEST PRICE: ..... £24.99, Amazon.co.uk

BEST BIT!

If awards were handed out for scary cutscenes, Rose'd scoop the lot.

- OUT: NOW
- FORMAT: Wii
- PRICE: £40
- DEVELOPER: TOYS FOR BOB
- PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
- ONLINE: NO
- OTHER FORMATS: DS/GBA
- WEB: WWW.THDOWNHILLJAM.COM
- PLAYERS: 1-4

WHAT IS IT?

Downhill racing game, on expensive planks of wood, using the Wii's tilt sensor as steering.

- Eight courses, plus variations of each
- Unlock new boards and outfits

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Do tricks and grinds to earn boost, and scream down skate-centric racecourses.

Wii

TONY HAWK'S DOWNHILL JAM

Each event is introduced with a silly mini-interview, but can be turned off.

Aside from Lord Tony himself, the skaters are imaginary characters.

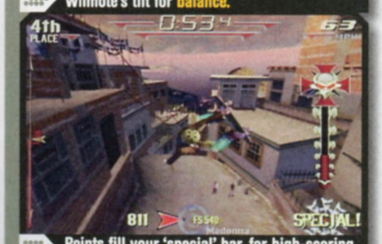
DOWN, BOY

So, you just point your skateboard downhill, right? 'Course not. Tricks may seem pointless when speed is king, but grinds will fly you along at Mach whoosh...

Jab the D-pad left or right to punch peds, or scupper your rivals.

Buttons 1 and 2 give you grabs and air tricks, with D-pad as modifier.

You'll be doing hugely long grinds, using the Wiimote's tilt for balance.



Points fill your 'special' bar, for high-scoring tricks and a bulging boost bar.

Wham, bam, it's the lanky man's jam!

It's a brand new *Tony* franchise on a brand new games machine, but it's all centred on an old idea: Any of you out there 'retro' enough to be worrying about death, taxes and oil prices may recall a pair of stages from the very first *Tony Hawk's* game – The Mall and, yep, Downhill Jam – where the typical trick-rich playgrounds were tipped on their end and turned into racecourses.

What's properly new, of course, is the chance to use the Wii controller as a steering wheel, but this feels like a game where it's just not needed – you'd have as much fun carving your way through it all with a standard joypad. But, it works fine, especially since the majority of the game is so much about just whizzing haphazardly down a slope, with each course offering shortcuts full of huge air with room for satisfying trick combos – they've certainly captured that aspect of the *Hawk's* games decently here. But trying to play with proper, directed skill in the game's later stages can be a fiddly uphill struggle, given the speed of it all.

Up until that point, it's enjoyably straightforward, with brief races making it feel almost like a party game for one (or more, via four-way multi-player, if you like). So, *Project 8* groupies will hate it, but those who don't want to have to master an entire joypad's worth of tricks in order to start having fun can jump right in, even if they won't end up filling their boots while they're at it. GM

"TRYING TO PLAY WITH SKILL IS AN UPHILL STRUGGLE"

BEST BIT!

The trick-focused events offer slow-mo spots where you can nail dozens of grabs while sailing through the air.

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES

+ The feeling of speed
+ The Wii remote works well enough

GM HATES

- The fact that it could be done on a regular joypad
- It's not the *Tony Hawk's* we all know and love, really

GRAPHICS 71%

Not great, but smooth and load times are next to nothing.

GAMEPLAY 72%

It's not friends with finesse, but is fast and raucous.

LIFESPAN 38%

Dozens and dozens of events, but no great variety.

OVERALL

69%

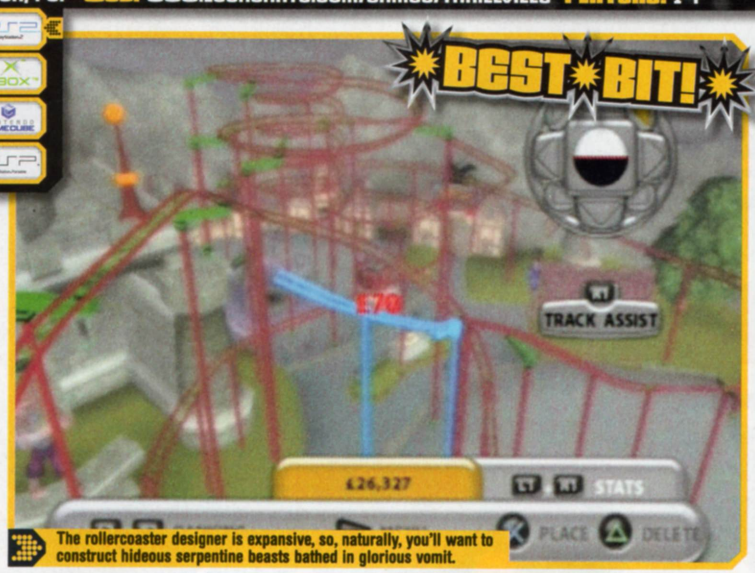
Solid but unspectacular short-term fun that dulls if you're looking for subtlety.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: .....Disney's Skateboarding
WORSE THAN: ..... Tony Hawk's Project 8, 90%
WAIT FOR: .....EA's SKATE, 2007
BEST PRICE: £32.99, www.choicesuk.com

REVIEW

• OUT: NOW FORMAT: PS2 PRICE: £29.99 DEVELOPER: FRONTIER PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS ONLINE: NO SPECIAL: NOTHING OTHER FORMATS: XBOX, PSP WEB: WWW.LUCASARTS.COM/GAMES/THRILLVILLE PLAYERS: 1-4



The rollercoaster designer is expansive, so, naturally, you'll want to construct hideous serpentine beasts bathed in glorious vomit.

THRILLVILLE™

Almost our kinda town...

Ironically, for a game entitled *Thrillville*, this is as sedate as a gentle stroll down a beach. Oh, you'll occasionally be asked to praise someone's sandcastle, as it were, or twirl a spinny flower thing, but it's no matter if you don't really feel like it. And that, luckily, is the point.

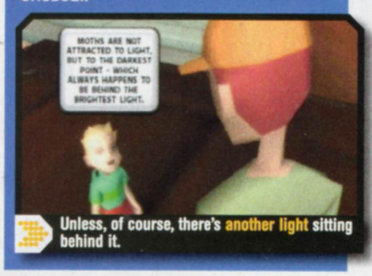
Thrillville, to escape the beach metaphor, is a theme park management game, except instead of spending your time as an all-powerful cursor probing the lands, you're a kid thrust into the hustle and bustle of it all. The rides and games are fully playable: one moment you're blasting some robots in a basic first-person shooter, the next moment zooming about in the dodgems, and the next-next moment busying yourself with a cutely tooled take on *Bubble Bobble*. And, meanwhile, missions are popping up in the menu: find six bugs planted by a rival park, for instance; train some groundskeepers in yet another mini-game; design a new 'coaster that exceeds a certain speed.

As there's never any threat of your park going bankrupt (it's mainly a question of seeing if you can get all the gold medals), and as the parks are already defined landscape-wise, this won't satisfy anyone looking for a proper sim – it's all too much in the background and never as detailed as it needs to be. It holds up as charmingly idle entertainment, though, even if it never sparkles. GM

Peculiarly, this and other bits of the game sporadically use the *Monkey Island* theme.

PARK SAUSAGE

You can curry the favour of each one of the scampering patrons in a little, simplistic chat mini-game. Hilariously, general conversation involves your bombarding the person with a relentless stream of trivia, which, for the most part, they never think is unusual.



Unless, of course, there's another light sitting behind it.

JUDGEMENT — ADAM

GRAPHICS 55%
Rudimentary punter models, but the parks are fairly decent.

GAMEPLAY 59%
None of the mini-games are brilliant, but it's all at least adequate.

LIFESPAN 75%
The games are multi-player friendly, and you can design most of their courses.

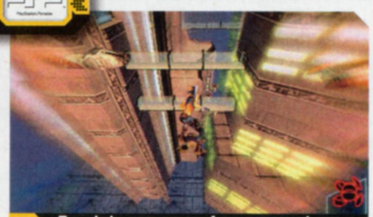
OVERALL

67%

Not quite the splendid bundle of excitement it aims to be, but nevertheless, laid-back fun.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..... The Sims 2 Pets, 54%
WORSE THAN:..... Rollercoaster Tycoon 3
WAIT FOR:..... Spore (2007)
BEST PRICE:..... £24.99 amazon.co.uk

• OUT: NOW • DEVELOPER: LUCASARTS • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
• FORMAT: PSP • OTHER FORMATS: DS • WEB: WWW.UBI.COM
• ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NONE • PLAYERS: 1-4

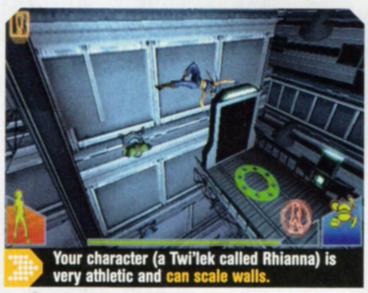


Zeeo helps you escape from pursuers by flying you through the airways on Coruscant.

The lock-on is great, allowing you to switch targets and keep your enemy in sight.

STAR WARS LETHAL ALLIANCE

This isn't the droid you're looking for...



Your character (a Twi'lek called Rhianna) is very athletic and can scale walls.

HELPING HAND

This is Zeeo – a little drone you rescue early on in the game. He'll help you solve puzzles, like heading through small tunnels to open doors from the other side, activate computer terminals and, best of all, will give you a much-needed combat boost.

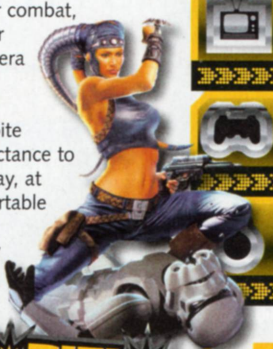
He can stun enemies for you, and finishing them off will build up your alliance meter.

When full, you'll gain access to more combat options, like this improved dodge.

If you take away the familiar John Williams music, that blaster noise and all the usual trappings of a *Star Wars* game, you're left with nothing more than a pretty straightforward third-person blaster.

All dull, gun-metal grey corridors, the odd computer terminal, laser traps and exploding boxes – there's nothing here that hasn't been done before. Clearing out rooms of enemies before you're allowed to progress, with 'puzzles' that never stray too far from the 'how do I get over there' or 'how do I open this door' formula. Not the most imaginative action adventure you'll ever play, we can tell you that much.

Still, it does have its merits. It's fairly attractive in places, and there are some smart ideas in here (like the co-operative droid elements) and, most importantly, the PSP's often annoying controls have been catered for pretty well. There's a generous lock-on for combat, for example, and, for once, a sensible camera system (rotate it by using the shoulder triggers) which, despite *Lethal Alliance's* reluctance to be exciting in any way, at least makes it comfortable to play – and that's something of a rarity these days. GM



JUDGEMENT — GERAINT

GRAPHICS 78%
Often lacking in imagination – but still quite impressive in places.

GAMEPLAY 65%
There's nothing in here you haven't done a million times before.

LIFESPAN 70%
There's a substantial multi-player here – but you'll find it tough finding a game.

OVERALL

71%

It's decent enough, but it's sloppy and a general lack of excitement hurt it.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..... Rengoku, 68%
WORSE THAN:..... PoP: Rival Swords, 83%
WAIT FOR:..... Rainbow Six: Vegas, PSP
BEST PRICE:..... £27.99, www.gameplay.com

It works! Third-person blasting action with controls that actually make sense! Praise be!

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: Wii • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: ATLUS
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: DS
WEB: WII.NINTENDO.CO.UK • PLAYERS: 1

TRAUMA CENTER™ SECOND OPINION

Another Wii game to dissect...

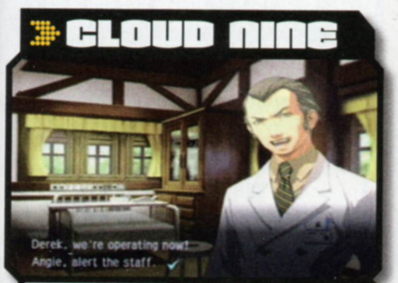
By the time you get to this stage, you'll need to be moving quickly.

Back when *Trauma Center* first came out on the DS, we thought it was an amazing idea for a game. Like a cross between *ER* and the board game *Operation*, it put you in the surgical gown of surgeon Derek Stiles, carrying out precision operations with the DS stylus.

This is very similar to the DS game – a lot of the ops in story mode are the same although there's some new stuff like a new female playable surgeon, a defibrillator and fixing up broken bones. The bone mending is one of the best new things – you grab hold of the fragmented bone by squeezing the A and B buttons like a pair of tweezers, then put them together like a jigsaw puzzle, rotating the remote to turn the pieces.

Trauma Center is as brilliant on Wii as it is on DS, but it does feel like a bit of an missed opportunity. There's no two player – we fancied a bit of head-to-head operating or co-op. And if you've played the DS game already you'll feel a bit stitched up by this near-identical remake. GM

CLOUD NINE



After a briefing, it's time to save the patient. When their vitals drop down you need to be quick with the adrenaline.

BEST BIT!

Fixing bones and pulling bits of broken glass out of wounds with a pair of tweezers are up there with the most satisfying gaming moments ever.

JUDGEMENT — KATH

GRAPHICS 34%
Nicely animated insides – and much better looking than on DS.

GAMEPLAY 35%
It's a brilliant idea for a game. Every operation tests your reactions.

LIFESPAN 75%
It's a pretty tough game, but once you've finished that's about it.

OVERALL

83%

A top launch title and one that should definitely be on your 'must buy' list.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Trauma Centre: Under the Knife, 82%
WORSE THAN: ..... Zelda: TP, 96%
WAIT FOR: ..... Wario Ware: Smooth Moves
BEST PRICE: ..... £37.99, www.play.com

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99 • DEVELOPER: UBISOFT • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
ONLINE: TIMED RACES • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XBOX, CUBE, PC • WEB: WWW.UBI.COM/UK/ • PLAYERS: 1-2

PRINCE OF PERSIA RIVAL SWORDS

The world's first schizophrenia sim...

PoP is a prime case in point for shooting whoever designed the PSP, *that* crappy analogue stick ensuring it's cast aside in frustration before your adventure has barely gotten started...

But persevere with those frankly useless controls because *Rival Swords* is actually a humdinger of a platformer. Okay, so the narrative is cheesy, the dark prince is camper than Eddie Izzard and the combat errs on the side of repetition – but in terms of pure platforming joy this underrated gem is irrepressible.

Whether you're charging along walls, throwig yourself across yawning chasms, desperately plunging your dagger into fissures hundreds of feet above the ground or sailing through Babylon's rooftops to orchestrate a bloody Speedkill everything feels utterly intuitive and immersive. Pity then that the 'new' levels only stretch to a few multi-player races and a spot of extra chariot racing.

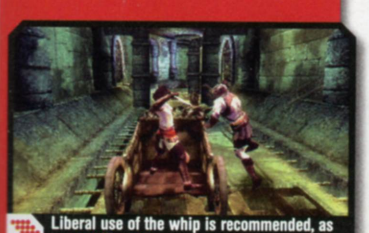
But beware – *PoP* has always been a frustrating experience owing to some harsh checkpoints and tricky combat, and you're likely to die a lot more than usual on PSP because it's just *so darn fiddly*. Thanks goodness for the Dagger of Time that lets you rewind any irritating mistakes... we just wish there were more sand tanks on PSP to compensate for the tougher gameplay.

Don't say you weren't warned then, but if you've nerves of steel and the patience of a saint this Persian platforming perfection is one of the top PSP titles around. GM

Speedkills aren't just uber cool; they also save you from repetitive combat.

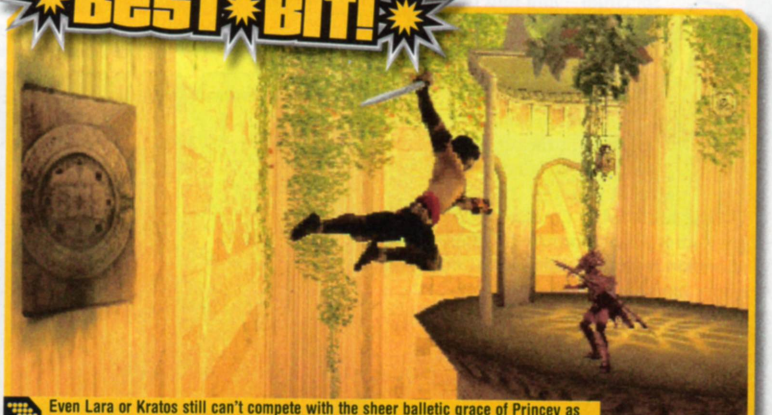
GIDDY UP!

Ben Hur-stylee chariot racing spiced up *Thrones*. On PSP you can leap straight into the throng with some rock hard, equine-based challenges.



Liberal use of the whip is recommended, as are cat-like reflexes...

BEST BIT!



Even Lara or Kratos still can't compete with the sheer balletic grace of Princey as he launches from wall to wall spreading his particular Persian brand of pain.

JUDGEMENT — DAVE

GRAPHICS 33%
Small screen flatters the basic textures, and animations are princely.

GAMEPLAY 36%
Nails the PoP mechanics for near-perfect platforming.

LIFESPAN 32%
Hardest final boss ever! New multi-player time trials are... okay.

OVERALL

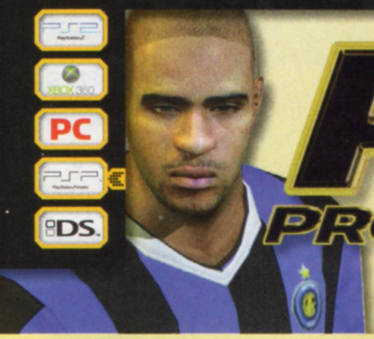
81%

A top platformer and classy send off for the prince, even if he is hamstrung by the PSP.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Death Jr.
WORSE THAN: ..... Daxter, 89%
WAIT FOR: ..... Assassins Creed (late 2007)
BEST PRICE: ..... £27.99, Amazon.co.uk

REVIEW

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99 • DEVELOPER: KONAMI • PUBLISHER: KONAMI • ONLINE: AD HOC MULTI-PLAYER • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, 360, PC, DS • WEBSITE: WWW.KONAMI.CO.UK • PLAYERS: 1-2



PES 6 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER™

PSP finally gets the *PES* it deserves...

Don't be afraid to shoot on sight, as this *PES* encourages walloping shots.

Gameplay-wise, this masterclass in footy harks back to the earlier *Pro Evos* – when the gameplay felt less sim-like and more arcadey. First touch and passing in particular – which can often seem punishing on PS2 – feels far more forgiving here. A renewed emphasis on strikes from distance also means you can test 'keeps from all angles, though it's a pity the power meter rises too rapidly, resulting in a lot of strikes over the bar.

It gets better. Bung in Master League and a wide camera angle and, save for the lack of Peter Brackley's commentary, this is as faithful a conversion of its PS2 big bro as we could ever have hoped for. But there's still one big problem...

See, neither the D-pad nor analogue stick are halfway decent substitutions for a PS2 pad, and finding those pinpoint passes can be an absolute nightmare. But it's not a lost cause; this is still a huge step up from the previous *PES* PSP and if you don't mind knocking a star off your regular difficulty level to compensate for those shoddy controls, then this is a true Galáctico. Get in! GM

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GRAPHICS 81%
Animation doesn't seem so compromised this season...

GAMEPLAY 88%
The slick, arcadey style gets us all nostalgic about the old days of *PES*.

LIFESPAN 90%
Now there's Master League *PES* is all-consuming on the move.

OVERALL

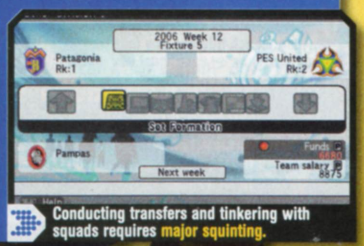
89%

Persevere with the D-pad/analogue nubbin purgatory and you'll discover a great *PES*.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... PES 5 (PSP), 80%
WORSE THAN: ..... PES 6 (PS2), 91%
WAIT FOR: ..... FIFA 08 (autumn)
BEST PRICE: ..... £28.99, DVD.co.uk

MASTERLY!

The biggest plus for *PES* this season? Master League of course! Puzzlingly omitted last time round, you'll now finally be able to prime your squad of hungry young lions to take on the footballing world.... or end up on the relegation scrapheap – all while waiting for the bus!



Conducting transfers and tinkering with squads requires major squinting.

BEST BIT!

Pacey and forgiving, we haven't had this much fun with *PES* for ages... hurrah and, indeed, huzzah!

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: Wii • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: BLITZ GAMES • PUBLISHER: THQ • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, GC, PC, DS, GBA • WEB: WWW.THQ.COM • PLAYERS: 1

NICKELODEON SpongeBob squarepants CREATURE FROM THE KRUSTY KRAB

Frankly, he scares us a little bit...

If you'd have grabbed our 10 year-old selves – interrupted them from hammering buttons to make a stickman run in *Daley Thompson's Decathlon* on the Spectrum – and told them that in the year 2006 they'd be controlling a videogame about a yellow sponge man by waving a controller round and round in the air, they would have laughed. Or sworn at you.

But this is what *Creature From The Krusty Krab* is – a platform/mini-game collaboration featuring a talking bathroom accessory (and his friends). The platforming bits are actually quite good with kiddy-friendly puzzles to solve and bits of cars and planes to find. Once you've got a new piece of car, you get to take part in a race.

The different levels in *SpongeBob* use the Wii controller in different ways. To drive, you turn the remote on its side and flying has you holding it vertically like the flight stick in a cockpit. Controlling different characters like Starfishman calls for slightly different controls too. While the fishy one has a turbo twist attack, SpongeBob ground stomps at a flick of the remote and barges when you shake the nunchuk.

It doesn't look very next-gen – probably because it's originally a PS2 game. But as far as Wii launch games for the kiddies go, its diversity makes this one of the better ones. GM

JUDGEMENT

KATH

GRAPHICS 52%
Jolly and fun with plenty of comic-book characters and critters.

GAMEPLAY 50%
Driving bits are basic but the platforming is pretty good.

LIFESPAN 59%
There's not too much to see or do once you've completed the single player story.

OVERALL

60%

Decent use of the controller and some nice platforming and puzzles make this OK.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer, 50%
WORSE THAN: ... Rayman: Raving Rabbids, 60%
WAIT FOR: ..... Wario Ware (Feb)
BEST PRICE: ..... £37.99, www.play.com

BEST BIT!

Puzzles aren't exactly *Zelda* standard but they involve a bit of thought. Not bad at all.

- **OUT:** NOW
- **FORMAT:** PS2
- **PRICE:** £34.99
- **DEVELOPER:** TIBURON
- **PUBLISHER:** EA
- **ONLINE:** NO
- **OTHER FORMATS:** XBOX 360
- **WEB:** WWW.EA.COM
- **PLAYERS:** 1

WHAT IS IT?

Play as the man of steel in a free-roaming game that strives to ape *Spider-Man 2*.

- Use all of Superman's super-powers
- Break the sound barrier!

HOW IT PLAYS!

IN GAME CLIP: Ah, the old enemy-who-can't-be-hit-and-fires-an-expanding-forcefield-that-never-makes-it-clear-whether-you're-in-range-or-not. Joy.

WHOOSH!

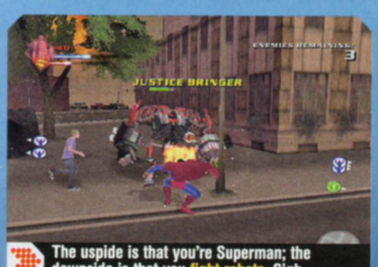
Superman's best power is flying really fast – hold R1. Fly at top speed for a few seconds, then break the sound barrier.

Superman's heat vision works nicely on cars, trees and cold meteors, but proves powerless against about half of the bosses.

Cold breath is good for putting out fires, getting robots to 'chill' and terrifying the general population...

...And a slightly different kind of cold breath works on hot meteorites and robots.

Yeha, so he can **throw cars around**. Doesn't make his game any good, does it?



The upside is that you're Superman; the downside is that you **fight robots**. Sigh.

SUPERMAN RETURNS

BEST BIT!

Seeing how fast you can go between the buildings before you accidentally headbutt one and kill several hundred innocent people.

Lex Luthor would laugh his head off!

It can't be easy being Superman. Yes, you're invulnerable to everything and you can punch buildings into space and Parker Posey secretly fancies you, but look at the downside: you end up feeling responsible for everything. Chances are, every time you go to the toilet or watch TV, you could be averting a plane crash or saving the president from an army of zombie Vikings. *An army of zombie Vikings!*

And that's sort of the problem in *Superman Returns*. Unlike previous Superman games, you don't worry about punching muggers – you strictly deal with meteor showers, alien invaders and gigantic robots. Your powers are impressive, too – you really can fly at super-speed, you run so fast that you can barely make sure you're going in the right direction half the time and you can throw really, really, heavy things... as long as you don't get hit while you're straining to pick them up, which happens more often than you'd think. And, of course, you don't actually die – you just sort of lose popularity by letting Metropolis get trashed (or accidentally trashing it yourself) until Superman has a little cry and the game stops. Sometimes this is ridiculous – like when Superman 'loses' a gladiatorial fight in Warworld just because he's hiding behind some scenery and the crowd get upset, even though you haven't actually been hit by anything – but usually it works.

So what's the problem? Well, it sometimes feels like the space invaders are having all the fun. They're whooshing around blowing up everything in sight – you have to spend half your time taking injured civilians to hospital. You have to be careful what you hit, too – which isn't easy when the lock-on mode's so shoddy that you usually overshoot what you're trying to aim at. And even though you can pick things up, it's usually best not to in case you cause too much property damage. Leave too many civvies lying on the pavement for too long and you'll be told that 'Metropolis has been destroyed!' despite the fact that all the buildings look fine. Worst of all, everything goes on far too long, with very little variation between attack waves of fast robots, strong robots, weird lizard things and combinations of the three. In short, being Superman sucks. And where are all the zombie Vikings? All in all, a super-sized disappointment. GM

"YOU REALLY CAN FLY AT SUPER SPEED AND YOU CAN THROW REALLY HEAVY THINGS"

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES

- Flying really, really, really fast
- The occasional moments where the lock-on works and you operate with super-efficiency

GM HATES

- The awful boss battles, full of attacks you can't block and struggling to pick things up
- The lock-on not working properly

GRAPHICS 35%
Metropolis: big but not very detailed. Cape physics: B-

GAMEPLAY 30%
"I've just flown past another enemy! Better beat him up."

LIFESPAN 30%
Surprisingly hard, but you aren't going to be flying around Metropolis for kicks.

OVERALL

46%

The superest Superman yet – probably – but still frustrating and a bit fiddly. Humph.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

- BETTER THAN: ..... Catwoman
- WORSE THAN: ..... Spider-Man 2, 88%
- WAIT FOR: ..... Ghost Rider
- BEST PRICE: ..... £29.99, amazon.co.uk

SUPERMAN GONE WRONG

So you're the most powerful superhero ever conceived, able to do almost anything. The most important question is: can you abuse your powers and act like a super-tool? Yes, thankfully, you can. A bit.

"Stop struggling, human. I can't throw you into the sea or punch you to death, but I can leave you stranded on top of a **skyscraper**, by the moons of Krypton."

"You're looking a bit chilly there, citizens. How about I heat things up with a gentle blast of **HEAT VISION?** Whoops."

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: Wii • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: TREYARCH • PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: 360, PS3, PS2, XBOX • WEBSITE: WWW.CALLOFDUTY.COM • PLAYERS: 1

CALL OF DUTY 3

War really can be hell with a Wii-mote...

Lobbing grenades can be fiddly unless you've got spindly fingers.

DRIVE BY

CoD3 isn't all on-foot fighting (by the way, keep an eye out for the rubbish new scripted melee mode). You'll often fight from the back of jeeps and tanks or – better still – actually leap inside one...

German tank go boom! As always, these bits feel underdeveloped but fun.

At other times you'll need to cower behind heavy artillery for cover...

Call of Duty 3 proved itself a bona fide war hero on Xbox 360 last ish, but what on earth's happened here?

CoD3 Wii is basically a like-for-like conversion of its Xbox 360 big bro minus all those swanky HD visuals. While the smoke effects, semi-destructible environments and hefty amounts of on-screen action all point to a decent engine lurking inside that cute little shell, you really do need a decent RGB Scart or even component to determine the tiny little Nazis you're constantly asked to mow down – playing this on our HDTV through the ugly bundled composite cable was *painful*.

But then Wii has an ace up its sleeve, that revolutionary new controller! But – argh! – it's actually a bit of a pain to use, feeling inaccurate and sluggish, while the muddy textures make discriminating between friends and foes a real pain. Basically, this Wii version is suffering from a bad case of portitis – that is, gameplay obviously designed for Xbox 360 and PS3 resolutions fails to scale satisfactorily on Ninty's little white box. And where's the multi-player gone?

We're still confident that Wii has a stellar FPS up its sleeve – *Metroid Prime 3* anyone? – but unfortunately this ain't it. GM

BEST BIT!

Diving for cover while chaos erupts around you – embarrassing but immersive.

We're suckers for a nice smoke effect – and *Call of Duty 3 pwns* them.

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GRAPHICS 78%
Lovely smoke and all that, but it otherwise looks a bit last-gen.

GAMEPLAY 36%
The usual *Call of Duty* mayhem, only more frustrating.

LIFESPAN 71%
Lengthy main campaign, but we're shocked at the AWOL multi-player.

OVERALL

69%

A good game that, alarmingly, seems hampered rather than helped by the remote.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Nothing
WORSE THAN: ..... Red Steel, 79%
WAIT FOR: Metroid Prime 3: Corruption (May)
BEST PRICE: ..... £34.99, Amazon.co.uk

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £34.99 • PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION • DEVELOPER: TREYARCH • ONLINE: YES
OTHER FORMATS: XBOX 360, WII, PS3, XBOX • WEBSITE: HTTP://WWW.CALLOFDUTY.COM • PLAYERS: 1-2

How does *Call of Duty 3* shape up on PS2?

It always happens. Just when you think a console is on its last legs someone shows it to be more powerful and more capable than you ever thought possible. And that is what you get in the opening level of *Call of Duty 3* – proof that PS2 can still spit out 12 US grunts, 30 angry Nazis and 1000 bullets at once.

For this is war as it should be: frantic, chaotic, messy and loud. Every battle makes you feel on edge, vulnerable, liable to take a grenade in the skull. Then, the weak Battle Action moments or an on-rails shooting section kick in and the atmosphere falls away like an over-dunked digestive biscuit.

TREY' ARCH DE TRIUMPH

But while the game drags you from set-piece scrap to scripted firefight, it's still exhilarating and exhausting, even if the unrelenting pace could do with the odd pause for thought, variety or subtlety. But while every bang is big, every battle is brutal and every bullet is coming straight at you, it's still great fun. Well, perhaps for one last time anyway. All in all, a nice little hurrah for PS2 before it retires gracefully in March and makes way for its shiny successor. GM

BEST BIT!

You don't have to command other grunts but they are pretty bright. Well, for made-up men inside your telly, anyway.

SMOKEY!

Everything the Xbox 360 version does, the PS2 has a good stab at trying to match. And it does it all really well with only a few fancy effects missing here and there.

The frantic first fight is just like on 360 but without the big plane crash and the shrapnel.

The smoke effects for the grenades are great and you can use it to hide behind too.

JUDGEMENT

ALEX

GRAPHICS 37%
Brilliant backdrops, odd soldiers, dull inside levels.

GAMEPLAY 34%
Loud, chaotic, frantic but orthodox carnage.

LIFESPAN 73%
Not massive and probably not more than once.

OVERALL

85%

Intense, anarchic, unrelenting and unsubtle, this is war and IT'S SHOUTING AT YOU.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Medal Of Honour: European Assault, 80%
WORSE THAN: ..... CoD 3 Xbox 360, 87%
WAIT FOR: ..... BiA: Road To Hill 30
BEST PRICE: ..... £24.99, Amazon.co.uk

MIXED BY
DARREN STYLES
AND BREEZE
BONUS
HIXXY CD
PARENTAL
ADVISORY
EXPLICIT LYRICS
CLUBLAND X-TREME
HARDCORE
3
FEATURING
DARREN STYLES BREEZE
HIXXY DOUGAL & GAMMER
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REVIEWS ROUND UP

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £19.99
DEVELOPER: SEGA • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT • ONLINE: NO
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • PLAYERS: 1-2

MIND QUIZ

Sega do their bit in training up a nation of super boffins...

Nintendo started the whole brain exercising craze last year with *Brain Training* on DS. Not to be out-grey mattered, Sega have released their popular PSP-a-like, *Mind Quiz*.

You start off entering your vital statistics, solving maths puzzles as quickly as you can and memorising shapes. Then the game calculates your 'brain age'. By doing the range of interactive Mensa style puzzles everyday, the game aims to lower your brain age. Good for anyone who'd rather be doing algebra than playing *GTA*, but it's not as good as *Brain Training*. **Kath**

Brain Age Test
Brain Age is
27
Again, you've set a new record!
Your Brain Age is really getting younger!
The youngest Brain Age you can get is 20.
Lower your brain age, just like in *Brain Training*. Hmm.

JUDGEMENT
OVERALL 66%
Now PSP owners can train their brains too, but it's better on DS.

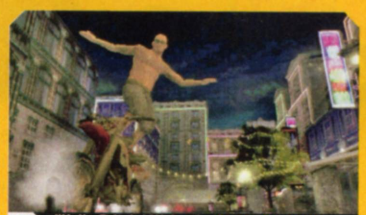
OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £19.99
DEVELOPER: RED MILE • PUBLISHER: DEEP SILVER
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • PLAYERS: 1-2

CRUSTY DEMONS

Yes, it's those 'world famous' Crusty Demons!

Apparently big in America, the Crusty Demons are a band of Jackass-a-like boys, just ones who prefer to pull off big, dangerous motocross tricks rather than set fire to their own farts.

Their game is very similar in structure to the *Tony Hawk's* games – you bike it around different areas, talking to people to get missions, running over everyone else who gets in your way and trying to find collectibles to ensure 100% completion of each level. It's all free-roaming and tricks are simple enough to pull off. It's fun and there are loads of vehicles alongside motocross bikes – it just looks and feels a bit old next to the latest *TH* games. **Rob**


"Hello Britain! We're the Crusty Demons! Hello? Anyone? Hello?"

JUDGEMENT
OVERALL 60%
It's like *Tony Hawk's* but with blood and bikes. And ageing graphics.

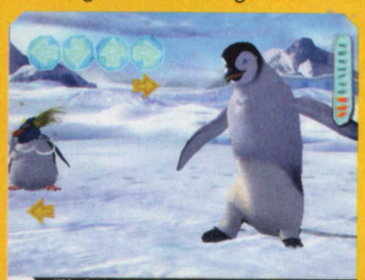
OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99
DEVELOPER: ARTIFICIAL MIND & MOVEMENT • PUBLISHER: MIDWAY
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: WII, PC, DS, GBA,
PLAYERS: 1-2

HAPPY FEET

We haven't said 'aw' so much since *101 Dalmations*...

Baby penguins are the cutest things ever. So *Happy Feet* should be high on the Christmas list of any self-deserving lover of all things cute.

The game has you dancing by hitting the right directional buttons on the D-pad in time to the music. It's also got some snow sliding and sea swimming levels with things to collect for medals. And that's about it. It's cute – penguins! – and great for young 'uns but it's about as difficult as breathing. **Geraint**


"My feet are so happy! Can you tell, children? Go on, give 'em a sniff!"

JUDGEMENT
OVERALL 58%
It's a sweet game and ideal as a 'my first videogame' for kids.

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: Wii • PRICE: £39.99
DEVELOPER: UBISOFT • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT • ONLINE: NO
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • PLAYERS: 1-4

MONSTER 4X4 WORLD CIRCUIT

Monster trucking mayhem!

The Wii has not one dirt-based skid-a-thon trucker launch game but two – this and *Excite Truck*. Ubisoft's offering is not bad either.

Tilting left and right to turn is helped by super-responsive vehicles that turn like power-assisted feathers. Races are all nice and manic with plenty of barging and shoving of explosive barrels into one another. However, it's pretty run-of-the-mill; expect more quality racers to come up behind it pretty soon. **Kath**

It's fun, but it's no *Excite Truck*. Let's hope better racing games are coming up.

JUDGEMENT
OVERALL 64%
Suitably fast and fun but it gets samey and a bit dull in single-player.

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £34.99 (WITH BUZZERS)
DEVELOPER: EIDOS • PUBLISHER: EIDOS
OTHER FORMATS: PSP • PLAYERS: 1-4

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE? PARTY

Very dull – is that your final answer?

Who wants to be a millionaire – should that really be a question? And should we really have to endure Chris Tarrant and another of his Christmas cash-in games?

Well, it depends on how much you want to answer streams of multiple choice questions. There are no surprises in this game – the only things you might not have been expecting are the compatibility with Sony's *Buzz* buzzers and the dodgy clichéd characters covering off everyone from mad Scots to chav Vicky Pollard types. It's all a bit predictable.

Multi-player is obviously where the fun lies – but this is still no *Buzz*, so get that instead. **Kath**

Anyone? Anyone? Nope, us neither. School was such a long time ago...

JUDGEMENT
OVERALL 58%
WWTBAM lends itself to being a predictable and slow quiz game.

PC • OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £34.99
DEVELOPER: PIRANHA BYTES • PUBLISHER: DEEP SILVER
PLAYERS: 1 • ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE

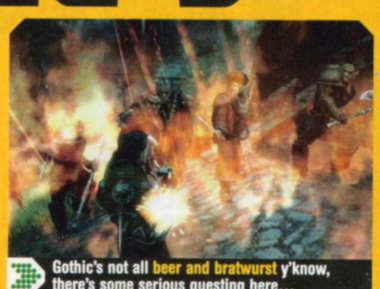
GOTHIC 3

The *Oblivion*-masher we've all been waiting for?

The *Gothic* series of RPGs are even more popular in Deutschland than David Hasselhoff, but it's only with this epic third instalment that UK gamers have gotten stirred up.

Playing as a mercenary type caught in the midst of a war between Orcs and human rebels, you can choose to aid the one and hinder the other, or play it as a double agent while romping around the countryside discovering the usual side quests. The gameworld certainly looks terrific. Alas, the button mashing combat is so slapdash it almost ruins the party.

While it lacks polish, *Gothic* is still well worth a look if you've been bitten by the *Oblivion* bug. (And beware, this game is ridden with them!) **Rob**


Gothic's not all beer and bratwurst y'know, there's some serious questing here...

JUDGEMENT
OVERALL 80%
A technically stunning rehash of *Gothic 2*, but that's no bad thing.

ULTIMATE FREE WAPSITE

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MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT

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1000's GIRLS GAMES MUSIC

UPDATED DAILY

CALL OF DUTY 3

WORMS

Cheat Master

Quality Cheatage Since 1993

Right. Here are the newest and coolest cheats currently in existence – unless you know better. If you've found something great in a game, come up with an easy way past a difficult bit or discovered something secret to amaze your fellow gamers we want to hear all about it. Send your stuff (take a quick pic if you can) to the usual address over the page. We're handing out free games and limited edition swag for the best things we're sent.

A virtual supermarket full of fresh cheats. Go crazy!

Tip of the Month

MARVEL

ULTIMATE ALLIANCE

PS2 XBOX 360

☑ GET ALL CHARACTERS ☑ EVERY COSTUME
☑ ALL THE COMIC BOOKS

CHEAT MODE
Enter one of the following codes at the indicated screen to activate the corresponding cheat function. Note: Achievements are disabled when cheats are activated.

ALL CHARACTERS
At the main menu or a S.H.I.E.L.D. save zone menu, quickly press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ←, ←, ←, Start. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.

ALL POWERS
At the main menu or a S.H.I.E.L.D. save zone menu, quickly press ←, →, ←, →, ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, ←, →, Start.

ALL COSTUMES
At the main menu or a S.H.I.E.L.D. save zone menu, quickly press ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, ←, →, ←, →, ↑, ↓, Start.

ALL CINEMATICS
At the Review menu, quickly press ↑, ←, ←, ↑, →, →, ↑, Start.

ALL COMIC BOOK COVERS
At the Review menu, quickly press ←, →, →, ←, ↑, ↑, →, Start.

ALL CONCEPT ART
At the Review menu, quickly press ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, →, ←, ↓, Start.

ALL WALLPAPERS
At the Review menu, quickly press ↑, ↓, →, ←, ↑, ↑, ↓, Start.

THE COURSES
At the simulator terminal screen where you choose a Comic Book mission, quickly press ↑, →, ←, ↓, ↑, →, ←, ↓, Start.

Heed the call – of duty! But it's more fun to go through the levels the proper way, we reckon.

CREW CHARGE
↓, ↑, ↑, →, ←, ←, →, ◎

UNLIMITED SPEEDBREAKER
↓, →, →, ←, →, ↑, ↓, ◎

UNLOCK NFS:C VINYL
→, ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, ←, →, ◎

UNLOCKS CARDBOARD BOX AND DRIVER VINYL
↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↓, ↑, ◎

CALL OF DUTY 3 360

☑ LEVELS AND PICTURES - UNLOCKED!

Enter the following code at the Chapter Select screen to unlock all levels and pictures. You'll need to re-enter it every time you restart your console Hold BACK and enter ➡, ➡, ⬅, ⬅ on D-pad then press Ⓧ, Ⓧ

VIVA PINATA 360

☑ EXTRA ACCESSORIES!

GET 5 EXTRA ACCESSORIES
Create a garden called 'chewnicorn' and you'll get 5 extra accessories at the Pet Shop when it's available.

NEED FOR SPEED: CARBON PS2

☑ ALL THE CASH!

Enter the following codes at the main menu.

EXTRA MONEY
↓, ↑, ←, ↓, →, ↑, ◎, Ⓐ

UNLIMITED

SPLINTER CELL: DOUBLE AGENT PS2 XBOX CUBE PC 360

☑ ALL THE ENDINGS

ALTERNATIVE ENDINGS
Successfully complete the following tasks to get the corresponding ending:

ENDING A - GOOD
Have your NSA trust above 33% and save at least two of the three targets (Crouse Ship, Hisham, Lambert).

ENDING B - NORMAL
Have your NSA trust below 33% and save all three targets (Crouse Ship, Hisham, Lambert). Alternatively, have your

Need a bit of money to enhance your racing life? We got all the answers right here.

YOUR TOP 10 TIPS

Share your top tips with us, the best one wins a game!

1. NEED FOR SPEED: CARBON PS2

If you have a previous *NFS: Most Wanted* (not the Black Edition) save on your memory card, you get a bonus $10,000 when you start a career in career mode.

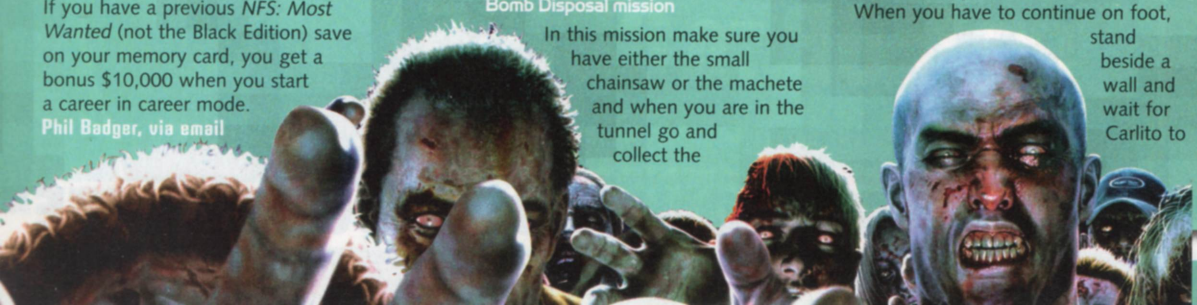
Phil Badger, via email

2. DEAD RISING 360

Bomb Disposal mission

In this mission make sure you have either the small chainsaw or the machete and when you are in the tunnel go and collect the bombs until your truck breaks down. When you have to continue on foot, stand beside a wall and wait for Carlito to drive towards you. At the last second dodge the truck and when Carlito crashes into the wall, quickly run up to the front of the truck and swipe at Carlito. When his health is gone you won't get chased by him anymore, which makes the mission much easier.

Gordon Jackson, via email



3. MORTAL KOMBAT:

GREATEST CHEATS EVER!

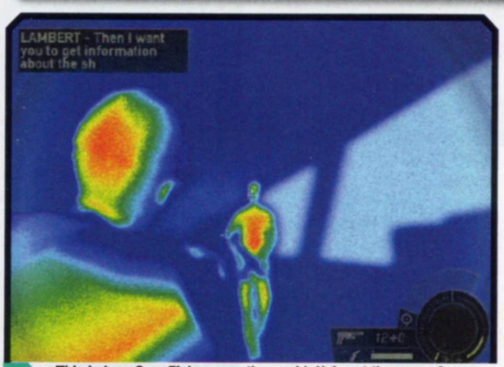
BOUNTY HUNTING BEAUTY!

METROID (NES)

PUBLISHER: ..... NINTENDO
YEAR OF RELEASE 1986

Ladies and gentlemen, the lovely Samus Aran! Not so lovely in her body armour, mind.

Gunpei Yokoi's classic adventure broke the mould when it was first released to Japanese punters two decades ago, but it wasn't the maze-like levels, intelligent weapon design or classic beasties that really inspired gamers – oh no. Instead, if you managed to beat the game in less than a hour (and that's some feat, believe us!) you were given a glimpse of Samus Aran sans *that* suit. Turned out she was a female! Okay, so it might be common knowledge now but back in the day this rocked *GM's* world, and our first ever gaming crush was born...



This is how Sam Fisher sees the world. He's got the eyes of spy, see. Makes knitting a little difficult, though.

NSA trust above 33% and destroy two of the three targets.

ENDING C - BAD
Destroy all three targets (Crouse Ship, Hisham, Lambert). Alternatively, have your NSA trust below 33% and destroy two of the three targets.

WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007 PS2 360

☑ UNLOCKABLE LEGENDS!

LEGENDS
Win the indicated trophy in Season mode to unlock the corresponding legend for purchase at the WWE Shop for $12,000 (except for Jerry Lawler and Tazz, who cost $10,000):

BAM BAM BIGELOW
Win the Unforgiven trophy.

BRET "HIT MAN" HART
Win the Survivor Series trophy.

CACTUS JACK
Win the SummerSlam trophy.

DUDE LOVE
Win the SummerSlam trophy.

HULK HOGAN
Win the WrestleMania trophy.

JERRY "THE KING" LAWLER
Win the No Way Out trophy.

MANKIND
Win the SummerSlam trophy.

MR. PERFECT
Win the Backlash trophy.

SHANE MCMAHON
Win the Armageddon trophy.

"STONE COLD" STEVE AUSTIN
Win the Royal Rumble trophy.

TAZZ
Win the No Way Out trophy.

"THE ANVIL" JIM NEIDHART
Win the Survivor Series trophy.

THE ROCK
Win the WrestleMania trophy.

Ah, ladies wrestling. This is the kind of thing that gets our Rob all 'unnecessary'. He needs to get out a bit more.

TOP 20 CHEATS

Oh cheaty cheats how we adore thee! Check out our updated UK Top 20...

01 NEED FOR SPEED: CARBON PS2 XBOX PSP 360

DO IT: At the title screen, press ←, ↑, ←, ↓, ←, ↓, →, ⊙.
WHAT IT DOES: Infinite nitrous!

02 WWE SMACKDOWN VS. RAW 2007 PS2 360

DO IT: Win the General Manager Of The Year trophy.
WHAT IT DOES: Infinite Create-a-Wrestler experience points.

03 CALL OF DUTY 3 XBOX 360

DO IT: At the chapter selection screen, hold BACK and press ➡, ➡, ⬅, ⬅, Ⓧ, Ⓧ.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks all levels and artwork.

04 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6 PS2 PC 360

DO IT: Look for these in the Master League: Raijka Radua CF (Pampas), Aissati AMF (Others), Heitinga CB/DMF (Ajax) and Proto GK (Anderlecht)
WHAT IT DOES: First team players for little cash.

05 FIFA 07 PS2 XBOX PC PSP

DO IT: If you get hacked down to the left or the right of the D, try this sneaky move. Instead of a regular cross, hit the shoot button but aim your 'shot' towards the penalty spot.
WHAT IT DOES: Kicks the ball at a pace that'll almost guarantee you a goal.

06 THE SIMS 2: PETS PS2 CUBE PC DS

DO IT: Enable the "Cheat Gnome" code by pressing L1, L1, R1, Ⓧ, Ⓧ, ↑, then press △, ◎, Ⓧ, ⊙, L1, R1 while playing.
WHAT IT DOES: Enables the "Pet Points" bonus option.

07 GTA: VICE CITY STORIES PSP

DO IT: While playing the game, press ←, →, △, ↑, ↓, ◎, ←, →.
WHAT IT DOES: The Chainsaw, Grenades, Laser Scope Python, Shotgun, MP5, M4, Mini-gun, and Sniper Rifle will be unlocked. Boom!

08 LEGO STAR WARS 2 PS2 XBOX DS 360

DO IT: Enter the code TTT289 at the Mos Eisley cantina.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks the Ewok bonus character for purchase in Free Play mode.

09 MEDIEVAL 2: TOTAL WAR PC

DO IT: While playing, press [~] (tilde) to bring down the console, then type add_money # Add Money (# = Amount - Max = 40000)
WHAT IT DOES: Gives you shedloads of cash.

10 CANIS CANEM EDIT PS2

DO IT: Hit stuff with projectiles (eggs, etc.) 1000 times.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks the awesome Green Ninja Outfit.

11 SPLINTER CELL: DOUBLE AGENT PS2 XBOX PC 360

DO IT: Have your NSA trust above 33% and save at least two of the three targets (Crouse Ship, Hisham, Lambert).
WHAT IT DOES: Gives you Ending A – the 'good' ending.

12 CARS PS2 GBA DS PSP

DO IT: Enter the code IF900HP.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks all tracks and mini-games.

13 TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07 PS2 XBOX PC PSP

DO IT: Enter ELDRICK as a code.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks over 20 golfers and over 30 course memberships.

14 POKEMON MYSTERY DUNGEON: BLUE RESCUE DS

DO IT: Before loading your save file, proceed to wonder mail and type in the following: CJKH 2468 0123 (...)=-? 68MN QRST.
WHAT IT DOES: Gives you 30 Joy Seeds.

15 SCARFACE: THE WORLD IS YOURS PS2 XBOX PC

DO IT: Pause the game and select the "Cheats" option, then enter the code "FPATCH".
WHAT IT DOES: Triggers the '1,000 Balls' mode (blind rage).

16 FOOTBALL MANAGER 2007 PC

DO IT: Buy the following players: Daniel Galbraith (Hearts), Freddy Adu (DC United), Lee Cattermole (Middlesbrough) and Magnus Wolffe Eikrem (Wolde).
WHAT IT DOES: They're all players with outstanding potential at bargain prices.

17 DR KAWASHIMA'S BRAIN TRAINING DS

DO IT: At the title screen say "glasses glasses" into the microphone.
WHAT IT DOES: Makes the doctor remove his glasses and say something to you.

18 THE LEGEND OF SPYRO: A NEW BEGINNING PS2 XBOX GBA DS

DO IT: Collect 57 Crystal Shards.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks the invincibility mode.

19 GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES PS2 PSP

DO IT: Enter R1, R1, R1, L1, L1, R1, ←, ⊙.
WHAT IT DOES: Unleashes a pedestrian riot.

20 F.E.A.R. PC 360

DO IT: Finish a multi-player game with a negative score, kill yourself five times in single player and kill five rats/crows.
WHAT IT DOES: Give you secret achievements 'Afraid', 'Suicide King' and 'Vermin Badge'.

ARMAGEDDON PS2 XBOX CUBE

If you're confused with which character to select with all those various fighters, simply Hold ↑ while highlighting Scorpion if you're player 1 or do the same thing on Sub-Zero if you're player 2. Then press Start so that that the computer picks a fighter for you in one easy step. Note: This similar code works on the previous versions *Deadly Alliance* and *Deception*, only you have to highlight on Shang Tsung for P1 and Quan Chi for P2 this time.

Wael AL-Abri, via email

4. TEKKEN ADVANCE GBA

I want to give you this cheat code for Tekken Advance for unlocking all the characters in an easier way.
To unlock all the characters without having to finish the game again and again, at the main menu hold A+B then press ←, →, →, ←, ←, ↑, ↑, R and you'll have all the characters instantly.

Can't be jiggered to unlock the characters the hard way? Then salvation is at hand!

Muhammad Salim Al-Abri, via email

5. SAINT'S ROW 360

Before you start Insurance Fraud, call up an ambulance on 911 and jack it. Start the mini-games and drive in the ambulance to the spot indicated on the map. Park within the zone then run into it and go limp when you hit it. You get extra points for a government vehicle. When the zone moves on the map, just use the ambulance. I

CANIS CANEM EDIT

PS2

- ☑ UNLOCK TINY SWIM-SHORTS
- ☑ DECK OUT IN A FIREMAN'S HAT!

NEW CLOTHES
Successfully complete the indicated task to unlock the corresponding item:
BIKE SHORTS
Ride 100km on a bike.
BLACK COWBOY HAT
Give a homeless man spare change in Bullworth.
BLACK NINJA COSTUME
Completely fill your yearbook.
BLACK SKATE SHOES
Walk at least 50 km.
BMX CHAMPION COSTUME
Successfully complete a bike race.
BOXING COSTUME
Successfully complete the Boxing Challenge or Prep Challenge in Chapter 2.
BURGLAR MASK
Found in a locker on Halloween.
CHEERFUL REINDEER SWEATER
Found in the school office during the winter.
CRASH HELMET
Finish in first place in the Kart Race at the Carnival.
DUNCE CAP
Fail three classes in a row.
EDNA MASK
Destroy all 19 tombstones.
FAST FOOD COSTUME
Successfully complete the Burger Joint errand in Bullworth Vale.
FIREFIGHTER'S HELMET
Pull the fire alarm 20 times.
GRADUATION HAT
Successfully complete all five levels in all of your classes.
GNOME COSTUME
Smash all the garden gnomes.
GO KART
Win all Go Kart races.
GOLD SUIT
Buy all the clothing.
GREEN NINJA COSTUME
Hit targets with projectiles 1,000 times.
GROTTO MASTER COSTUME
Collect all G&G cards.
INCOGNITO HAT
Successfully complete Errand #21 near City Hall.
JIMMY'S SKELETON HALLOWEEN COSTUME
Successfully complete the "The Candidate" mission to unlock the "Halloween" mission.
ORDERLY UNIFORM
Successfully complete "Finding Johnny Vincent" in Chapter 5.
PIRATE HAT
Beat up the pirate on the island near the beach house.
PRISON UNIFORM
Successfully complete all the detention mini-games.
PUMPKINHEAD MASK
Destroy all 27 pumpkins around the school and inside the main building.
RED NINJA COSTUME
Successfully complete the Big Prank task during Halloween at Bullworth Academy.
RUBBERBAND BALL (WHICH YOU CAN THROW AT PEOPLE TO KNOCK THEM OVER)
Collect all 75 rubber bands.
RUNNING SHORTS
Run or walk 40 km.
SCHOOL MASCOT COSTUME
Successfully complete the "Nice Outfit" mission in Chapter 4.
SODA HAT
Drink 500 sodas.
TINY SWIMSUIT
Find the preppie with a blue mission on the beach at the beach house and beat his swimming time.
VIKING HELMET
Get all collectibles.
WEREWOLF MASK
Found in a school locker after picking the lock.
WRESTLING UNIFORM
Successfully complete Gym 1.

So, what do you think of this, then? Sick gaming filth or jolly good school-based fun? We're reckon the latter.

THE SIMS 2

PC

- ☑ UNLIMITED SIMOLEONS
- ☑ HAVE TWINS!
- ☑ MAKE YOUR PETS LIVE FOREVER

CHEAT CODES
While playing the game, press [Ctrl] + [Shift] + C to display the console window. Then, type one of the following case-sensitive codes to activate the corresponding cheat function:
DISPLAY INFORMATION ABOUT INDICATED CHEAT
help [cheat command]
1,000 MORE SIMOLEONS
Kaching
50,000 MORE SIMOLEONS
motherlode
PETS FULLY CONTROLLABLE, BUT CANNOT CANCEL ACTIONS FROM THEIR QUEUE
boolprop ControlPets [on or off]
ACTIONS IN A PET'S QUEUE ACCESSIBLE
boolprop PetActionCancel [true or false]
DISABLE AGEING FOR KITTENS AND PUPPIES
boolprop DisablePuppyKittenAging [true or false]
DISABLE PET FREE WILL
boolprop PetsFreeWill [true or false]
VIEW LABELS IN DETAIL FOR BUY AND BUILD MODE OBJECTS; SHOWS WHICH PRODUCT THEY CAME FROM (EP OR SP)
boolprop ShowCatalogePFlags [true or false]
ACTIVATE TOOL TO CHANGE THE ROOF SLOPES OF INDIVIDUAL ROOFS
IndividualRoofSlopeAngle [15-75]
DELETE ALL INDICATED OBJECTS ON LOT
DeleteAllObjects [Doors or Windows or Stairs]
DELETE ALL FENCES ON LOT
DeleteAllFences
DELETE ALL HALF WALLS ON LOT
DeleteAllHalfWalls
DELETE ALL WALLS ON LOT
DeleteAllWalls
NO CENSOR; SET TO 8 TO RETURN TO NORMAL
intprop censorgridsize 0
HAVE TWINS WHEN BABY IS BORN
twinzr2cute or twinsr2cute

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI TENKAICHI 2

PS2 Wii

- ☑ LOADS OF UNLOCKABLE CHARACTERS!
- ☑ 100,000 ZENNY!

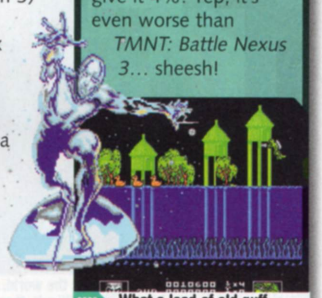
100,000 ZENNY
Load a saved game file from the original *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi* using the option at the main menu to get an extra 100,000 Zenny.
PLAY AS BARDOCK
Unlock the Bardock The Father Of Goku scenario in Story mode.
PLAY AS BURTER
Defeat Burter in Frieza Saga Story mode to unlock him.
PLAY AS CELL (FIRST FORM)
Defeat Cell with Piccolo in Android Saga Story mode to unlock him.
PLAY AS CELL (PERFECT FORM)
Successfully complete Android Saga Story mode to unlock Cell (Perfect form).
PLAY AS DABURA
Defeat Dabura with Gohan (Super Saiyan 2) in Majin Buu Saga Story mode to unlock him.
PLAY AS FRIEZA (FINAL FORM)
Defeat Frieza (Final Form) three times in Frieza Saga Story mode to unlock him.
PLAY AS GINYU
Defeat Ginyu in Frieza Saga Story mode two times to unlock him.
PLAY AS GOGETA (SUPER SAIYAN)
Successfully complete the Fusion Reborn Story mode to unlock Gogeta (Super Saiyan).
PLAY AS GOHAN (GREAT SAIYAMAN)
Unlock Majin Buu Saga in Story mode to unlock Gohan (Great Saiyaman).
PLAY AS GOTEN (SUPER SAIYAN)
Unlock Majin Buu Saga in Story mode to unlock Goten (Super Saiyan).
PLAY AS GOTENKS (SUPER SAIYAN)
Defeat Super Buu with Gotenks (Super Saiyan 3) in Majin Buu Saga Story mode to unlock Gotenks (Super Saiyan).
PLAY AS GULDO
Defeat Guldo in Frieza Saga Story mode to unlock him.
PLAY AS JIECE
Defeat Jiece in Frieza Saga Story mode twice to unlock him.
PLAY AS KAIOSHIN (SUPREME KAI)
Reach the Part where everyone goes off to fight Majin Buu in Majin Buu Saga Story mode to unlock Kaioshin (Supreme Kai).
PLAY AS KAME SENNIN (MASTER ROSHI)
Defeat Kame Sennin in Saiyan Saga Story mode to unlock him.
PLAY AS KID BUU
Successfully complete the Majin Buu Saga Story mode to unlock Kid Buu.
PLAY AS KID GOKU
Successfully complete Majin Buu Saga Story mode to unlock Kid Goku.
PLAY AS MAJIN VEGETA
Defeat Majin Vegeta with Goku in Majin Buu Saga Story mode to unlock him.
PLAY AS MAJUUB (UBB FUSED WITH MAJIN BUU)
Defeat Baby with Majuub in Baby Saga Story mode to unlock Majuub (Ubb fused with Majin Buu).
PLAY AS MR. SATAN (HERCULE)
Defeat Cell (Perfect form) with Mr. Satan (Hercule) in Android Saga

THE HARDEST GAMES IN THE WORLD

SILVER SURFER (NES)

PUBLISHER: ARCADIA SYSTEMS
YEAR OF RELEASE: 1990

Rumour has it that somebody, somewhere, once beat Silver Surfer – but we'll believe it when we see it. We always suspected the icy dude was the biggest wimp in Marvel's roster, and this proved it once and for all. Forget an energy bar – just one hit spells curtains, and when the game flings thousands of enemies at you with some of the dodgiest collision detection *ever* we guarantee you'll barely last a minute. If we had to review this game tomorrow, we'd give it 4%. Yep, it's even worse than *TMNT: Battle Nexus 3*... sheesh!


What a load of old guff. Sorry, Mr. Surfer.

YOUR TOP 10 TIPS

feel a little stupid constantly running into a non-moving ambulance but hey, at least there's a reward for this madness.
Dan Malin, Warwickshire

6. SPYRO: A NEW BEGINNING

DS

Collect the following numbers of crystals to get the unlockables:
Cynder character skin
60 crystals
Disco palette
45 crystals
Infinite Breath
54 crystals
Invincibility
57 crystals
Maximum Powers
51 crystals
Permanent Zoom mode
48 crystals
Puzzles 1-20
20 crystals
Puzzles 21-40
40 crystals
Tiny Spyro
43 crystals
Harry Hicks, Portsmouth

Want to know what nabbing all those crystals gets you? Wonder no more!

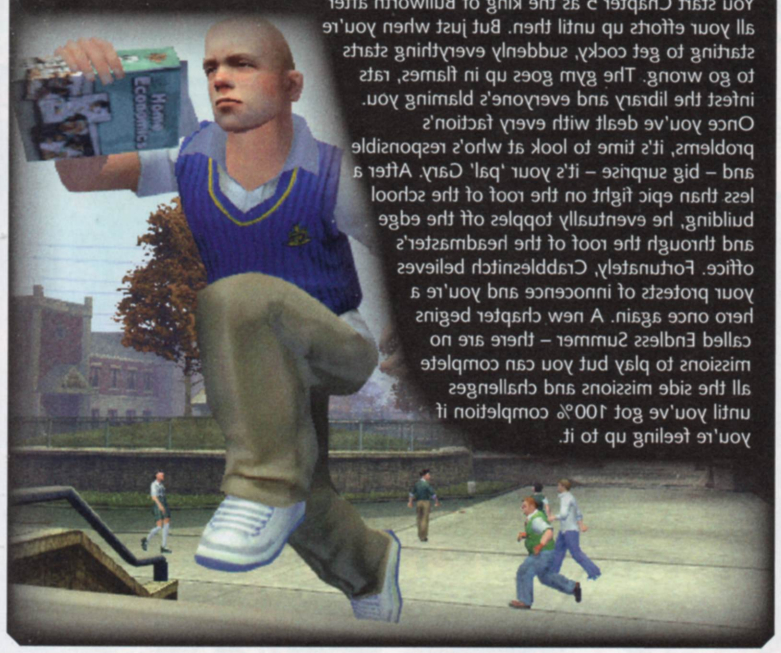
7. CANIS CANEM EDIT PS2

If you don't manage to fsmash all the tombstones and pumpkins on Halloween, don't worry. After this chapter, the ones you didn't get will be stored away in the basement of the main school building – get them to unlock new extras.
Kevin Hallett, via email

Spoiler!

Read this in a mirror to reveal all...

CANIS CANEM EDIT (PS2)



You start Chapter 5 as the king of Bullworth after all your efforts up until then. But just when you're starting to get cocky, suddenly everything starts to go wrong. The gym goes up in flames, rats infest the library and everyone's blaming you. Once you've dealt with every faction's problems, it's time to look at who's responsible and – big surprise – it's your 'pal' Gary. After a less than epic fight on the roof of the school building, he eventually topples off the edge and through the roof of the headmaster's office. Fortunately, Crabblesnitch believes your protests of innocence and you're a hero once again. A new chapter begins called Endless Summer – there are no missions to play but you can complete all the side missions and challenges until you've got 100% completion if you're feeling up to it.

Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS NAPPA
Defeat Nappa in Saiyan Saga Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS PAN
Successfully complete all of the Dragon Ball Z Stories in Baby Saga Story mode to unlock Pan.

PLAY AS PIKEHAN (PIKKON)
Defeat Pikehan (Pikkon) with Goku in Fusion Reborn Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS RADITZ
Defeat Raditz in Saiyan Saga Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS RECOOME
Defeat Recoome in Frieza Saga Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS SUPER BUU
Defeat Super Buu three times in Majin Buu Saga Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS SUPER VEGETA (SUPER SAIYAN)
Defeat Cell (second form) with Super Vegeta (Super Saiyan) in Android Saga Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS TAO PAI PAI (GENERAL TAO)
Successfully complete Saiyan Saga Story mode to unlock Tao Pai Pai (General Tao).

PLAY AS TAPION
Defeat Tapion with Kid Trunks in Wrath Of The Dragon Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS TEEN GOHAN (SUPER SAIYAN 2)
Successfully complete Android Saga Story mode to unlock Teen Gohan (Super Saiyan 2).

PLAY AS TRUNKS (ULTIMATE SUPER SAIYAN)
Defeat Cell (Perfect form) with Trunks (Ultimate Super Saiyan) in Android Saga Story mode to unlock him.

PLAY AS ULTIMATE GOHAN (GOHAN ELDER KAI UNLOCKED ABILITY)
Reach the part where Ultimate Gohan fights Super Buu in Majin Buu Saga Story mode to unlock Ultimate Gohan (Gohan Elder Kai unlocked ability).

WE WANT YOUR TIPS!

We want your best tips and secrets for any game. Make sure they're cool things you've discovered and email them to gamesmastertips@futurenet.co.uk or by post to My Top Ten Tips, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. The best tip every month gets a free game.

8. SPLINTER CELL: DOUBLE AGENT 360

Unlock all multi-player maps

Win six games as a spy, six games as an UPSILON Force member and play 25 games overall.

Ian Howes, via email

9. GEARS OF WAR 360

Insane difficulty

Complete it on Casual or Hardcore difficulty to unlock Insane difficulty.

Chris Pace, Bristol

10. POKEMON MYSERY DUNGEON: BLUE RESCUE TEAM DS

Ability to Evolve your Pokemon

To evolve your Pokemon,beat Rayquazza. Then you'll get access to Luminous Cave. The next time you try to leave and go on any mission, your partner will stop you and tell you how to change leaders and travel using just one Pokemon. Enter Luminous Cave with just the Pokemon you want to evolve.

Robert Owen, via email

CONSOLETATION ZONE

GM – coming to the aid of stuck gamers since 1993!

THE SUFFERING

THE SUFFERING PS2

Hiya *GM*,
I'm really enjoying playing through *The Suffering* on PS2 but I'm stuck at the Dock level where Torque has to battle the last three villains. I've taken Insanity and evil Torque out, but I simply can't figure out how to kill that giant creature with the anti-Torque hanging out of its belly. Help me *GM!*

Alexander Henry, Ballymoney

End of game baddies are always a bitch to take down Alexander, and this freak is no exception. Firstly, blast away at it to make it retreat, then head along the fence to the right. Lower the contraption on the nearby crane using the controls, then walk under the crane to charge up your psychosomatic energy. Shoot this energy at the red glob on its chest (you can tell when your shots are hitting home by the electricity that covers its body). Keep going and eventually it'll die, and you've finished the game. Phew! Just don't forget to replay it on different difficulty settings to unlock all three endings...

GOT A PROBLEM? STUCK IN A GAME?

WE CAN HELP! EMAIL IT TO US AT GAMESMASTERTIPS@FUTURENET.CO.UK, SUBJECT CONSOLETATION OR WRITE TO CONSOLETATION ZONE, GAMESMASTER, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH. BA1 2BW. IF WE CAN'T HELP - YOU'VE HAD IT!

FINAL FANTASY X-2

Dear GM,
After reading your *FF13* preview I decided to dust off my copy of *X-2*. Trouble is, I've been charged with retrieving the sphere from the ruins of Zanarkand but I keep getting massacred by the tough Behemoths than patrol the area. I've tried to level up on weaker baddies but it's not helping much...

Tom Hayward, Minster-on-Sea

First of all, make sure you're brimming with health and magic potions, then try to soften him up with magic attacks (but not thunder – they'll regenerate his health!), before hammering them with a chained physical attack. And that's it, really. Since they'll give you 102 XP per kill, try to kill a few of them at a time before saving. You'll level up in no time, making it a cinch to finish the rest of the ruins and reclaim the sphere...

GM'S TOP 5 MOST WANTED TIPS

01: ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS
It's belief-beggaringly enormous! What have you found that no-one else has?

02: GEARS OF WAR
We're currently loving playing this online. Got any map-specific multi-player hints and tips to share?

03: CALL OF DUTY 3
It's harder than nails made of stone! Send in your tips!

04: GTA: VICE CITY STORIES
We need help completing some of the missions. Get writing!

05: VIVA PINATA
Kath's got an enormous garden but hasn't got all the pinatas yet. Let us know how to catch 'em all! (Apologies to Nintendo, there.)

TIPSTER
Martin 'The' Saint

KNOW HOW TO CRACK THE BIGGES

We've blasted the six biggest games of the year wide open!

GEARS OF WAR

War is hell? It'll be a walk in the park after you've read this handy guide to *Gears'* toughest bits. Hoo-hah!

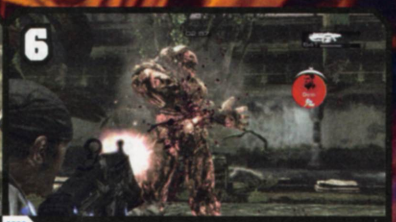
The Lancer should be kept as one of your main weapons throughout the game, as it's the best automatic weapon, and the chainsaw is unbeatable from close range. The Locust's machine gun doesn't compare to it.

If you can see an Emergence Hole that's reachable by grenades then throw one at it at the slightest opportunity. Destroy the Emergence Hole early, and you won't have to battle the hordes of Locust coming out of it.

The best way to take out Boomers is to use the shotgun or Lancer just out of their grabbing range and strafe them so their slow moving rockets will miss you. Don't try using your chainsaw on 'em – you'll have no luck!

When night falls, stepping out of the light is fatal. Gas cans are the usual handy lighter fuel, but at one stage you have to blow up this car and keep pace with it as it moves down the hill. Sadly, stupid old Dom will sometimes get ripped to shreds by the Kryll.

These living ground-to-air missile batteries can only be taken out by the Hammer of Dawn, so don't waste your ammo. Focus on aiming right in the centre of the beast for maximum effect. A couple of blasts should do it.



The first Beserker is easy. You lure her outside and use the Hammer of Dawn to soften her up for your Lancer. The second, shown here, is to get her in to the next room and knock the pillars down, exposing her to the Hammer of Dawn.

The Beserker on the train is tough but she can't run through the metal hoops as she does the tankers, so get behind them. Dive out of her way when she charges at you on the specified carriage and quickly run over to the button to separate the trains.

The Corpser is only vulnerable in the belly at first. Once you shoot it here, it will open its vulnerable mouth. Shoot it's mouth and it will retreat. Keep repeating until... dead! This is much easier when playing co-operatively.

After it has retreated two or three times, you may notice there are large floor clamps holding the islands you and the Corpser are on together. Shoot both of these before the Corpser can get back on to your island and she's a goner.

Killing RAAM is tough, especially on Hardcore. It's an exercise in shooting as much as you can whilst getting out of there before RAAM can get his hands on you. Always stay in the light – RAAM controls the Kryll, and they'll kill you at any opportunity, should you step out the light.

CANIS·CANEM·EDIT

HOW TO BEAT THOSE REALLY

PREPPIES

The Preppies are fairly easy to beat. Block their combos and return fire with yours. Even though they're quite weak, it's not the best idea to take a group of them on, so run away if this is the case, using a fire cracker behind you to slow them down.

GREASERS

Greasers are like Preppies but slightly tougher. They have the strength to pin you to the ground, which is difficult to get out of. This means that you'll only be able to beat multiple Greasers with help from the spud gun.

JOCKS

Try and grab Jocks and pummel them in a standing position, so you can release them and turn to face other Jocks that may be ganging up on you. The spud gun is good again, but run if there's more than a couple of them.

PREFECTS

The prefects and cops are very strong and if they get a hold of you, they can KO you instantly. They don't have too much stamina so after they've chased you for a while, they'll tire, allowing you to do the damage. Never try to take on groups.

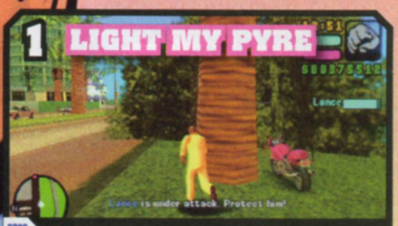
T XMAS GAMES

grand theft auto
Vice city Stories

Vice City Stories goes back to a simpler time, when leg warmers were king and Duran Duran were inexplicably top of the charts. So step back in time and check out our tips...

PSP

1 LIGHT MY PYRE



This is probably the trickiest mission in the game, as you have to chase Lance down before he's killed and storm a fortified mansion. Make sure you have the minigun stocked up before you attempt the final showdown with Mendez.

2

As soon as Lance drives off after Mendez's goons, sprint east to find a bike next to a tree on the sidewalk. Sprint after Lance, but be sure not to shoot him or take him out with your bike or car, should you have swapped to one.

3

Once you've made it to the mansion, charge on through to Mendez and ignore his henchmen (although try not to get hit, obviously). Open up with the minigun and cut him down before he can let his hefty flamethrower loose.

1 LAST STAND

Load up on rockets before you start this mission. It's the last one, so expect it to be hairy. Fire rockets into the building, whilst trying to strafe the recieving gunfire. This is very difficult, as the chopper doesn't have a great turning radius.

2

Once on the building, pick up the RPGs and use an assault on Mendez's flunkies. Be very cautious – they are everywhere. And naturally, try not to fire the RPG to close to yourself and give yourself a case of the explosions...

3

Dash behind some filing cabinets, just as the chopper targets you. It will pause after it's unloaded at you, giving you the chance to shoot it with your RPG. Two RPGs later, and only one Mendez brother is left between you and city domination.

1 GO BY LAND, SEA OR AIR...

The Sentinel – the car of choice for most, and certainly for Team *GM*, as it's got speed, great handling and can take a lot of punishment. The best place to find one is on Prawn Island outside the Mendez mansion.

2

Helicopters can be found all over Vice City, and this one is hiding to the east of the Escobar airport. Don't ever underestimate the usefulness of helicopters. Besides, just swooping through the skies is fun in itself.

3

The Violator is one of the best water vehicles because its big, fast and can take some punishment. It can be found to the north east of the golf course entrance. The jetskis might be fun, but this beast takes the cake.

TOUGH KIDS AT LUNCH TIME...

YOUR FIRST TEST – RUSSELL

The only weapon that works against Russell is the fire cracker, so use these wherever possible. Dodging him when he's charging will stun him if he walks into a wall, which is the perfect point at which to pummel him or throw fire crackers at him.

OUTNUMBERED?

Use your surroundings – garbage cans and bricks are littered about the school – to inflict maximum damage. Use Ⓐ a lot to push enemies down quickly to minimise being hit from behind. Single out one enemy for combo punches whilst his friends are on the floor.

PROTECTION

Protecting students – such as Algie – is a staple of some the missions in *Canis Canem Edit*. When escorting or defending students, use the spud gun or the slingshot to get some early hits in before enemies get a chance to close in.

The problem here is that you can get segregated from your allies, leaving them to fend for themself – and students like nerds don't fair well in these siuations. Using the slingshot is good at taking down more than one enemy at a time.

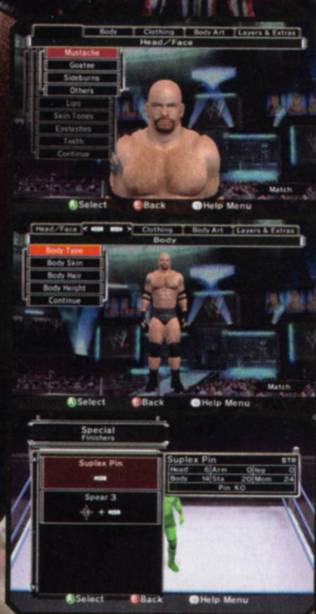
SmackDown vs Raw 2007

SmackDown! already has its own healthy roster of WWE legends. However, swivel your eyes down for guides on how to create some other wrestling wonders...

STING

The Legendary Crow-alike wrestler is now a fan favourite at TNA. Make him in *SmackDown!* and rejoice in the Scorpion Deathlock!

Face type 2
Hair type 22 (black)
Eyes brown 2
Body type 0
Skin type 0
Skin type 4th shade
Body hair 1
Body height 6'6"
Logo 26 (white)
Costume15 (black – shade 69, alpha 100)
Coat 2 (black)
Logo 26 (white)
Gloves 13 (black)
Face paint 56 (black), 123 (white)
Make up 33 (black)
Knee pads 15
Bret Hart fighting style
N.W.O. signs



GOLDBERG

This beast of a man is no longer in the WWE, something we're not happy about. So we made him, Jackhammer and all. Who's next?

Face 3
Hair 50
Moustache 3 or 4
Goatee 8
Eyes 1 (blue)
Head morph – height –58, width 6, depth 56,
Forehead morph – size –7, height –51, width –1, depth 21
Body -100

ADVANCED BODY

NECK
Height 27
Width 36
Depth 35

SHOULDER
Height –1
Width 20
Depth 0

ABDOMEN
Height –7
Width 33
Depth 0

WAIST
Waist -19
Depth 14

ARMS
Height -27
Width 9
Depth 12

Body Skin 1
Body Hair 2
Elbow pads 4 (black)
Gloves 7 (black)
Knee pads 15 (black)
Shoes 10 (black)
Tattoos – left arm, 70 (customise colour to black with hint of green)
Move set – power
Finisher – Suplex pin/Spear 2

BRUCE LEE

Become the master of martial arts and take on all-comers. Remember that with all the wrestlers you create, you have to build up their stats in the season mode. Unfortunately, even Bruce Lee will be rubbish if you don't.

Face type 5
Hair type 7 (black)
Eyes 2 (brown)
Eyebrows 37
Skin tone 12
No facial hair
Lips 1

FACE MORPHING

EYEBROWS
Y-axis -16
Thickness 8
Depth 23
Angle 71

EYES
Size -8
Height -60
Width 68
Y-axis 0
X-axis -35
Depth 0
Angle 41

NOSE
Size 60
Height -67
Width 8
Length -46
Nostril H. 32
Nostril W. -42
Depth 16
Angle -34

MOUTH
Height 5
Thickness -25
Width -100
Depth -47
Upper lip -66
Lower lip -78
Angle -100

JAW
Height -12
Width -54
Depth -22
Outline -20
Upper line -24
Thickness 5

Skin Aging 30
Body type 0
Body skin 7
Body height 5'7"

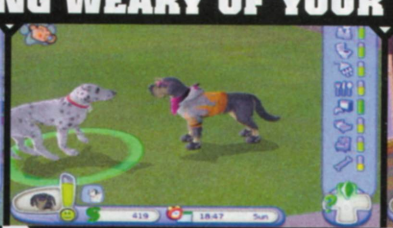
Trousers 32
Socks 17
Shoes 22

Body type 7
Shade 3
Fighting style - Striker/Brawler/Daivari

The Sims Pets

IF YOU'RE GETTING WEARY OF YOUR PET AND CAN'T

Strapped for cash? Purchase something from the Pet Emporium and press start. Go to family inventory and put it down. Pick it up again in grab mode and sell it for more money. What could be easier? Cash flow problems no more!



If your animal isn't being social enough for your liking, go to edit pets and edit the personality so it's more snooty. Hopefully, you'll find that your cat/dog will be much more obliging to other pets, which should help loads.

Go to any fridge and get out some pork, chicken, tofu and beef. Cook them and when the meal comes out, it'll be sparkly. Eating it will make you sparkle and your stats won't diminish for a while.

NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

Become the lord of the road with our guide to faster, flashier, speedier car buying and modding!

Regardless of whether you're driving a Muscle Car or a Coupe, the most important thing for the beginner to do is get some grunt under the bonnet. Once more areas have been unlocked, if your car doesn't have the power, you won't see your rival gangs for dust.

This is the RX-7, and isn't made available until later on in the game, but is almost certainly the best of the unlockable cars in the eary-ish stages of the game. The RX-8 (left) is probably the best car to start with for beginners, due to superior handling.

Unlock Nitrous and turbo tiers as quickly as you can. If you're a beginner, you may prefer to have a longer nitrous boost with less power to get yourself out of scrapes. Pros might tend to swing towards a powerful but short boost to get every last drop of speed out of their car.

The acquisition of new crew members are vital, as each one that's employed gives you a bonus upon completion of a race. For example, winning a race with one crew member actually takes Police attention off of you.

Pimping up your car is a must, and there is no better way to do it then to unlock accessories yourself and adjust the size and shape of all mods on the car to give you a unique looking racer. And what could be nicer than that?

The DB-9, after performance mods, is an absolute dream to drive and a great race-winner. Pre mods, it doesn't really excel in any area. One refitting later, and the DB-9 is a beast ready to take on all-comers.

And here's the finished look. Using a stylus (like we've done here), we've topped off our nitrous and modded the four-wheeled beast with a firey looking number. Getting a good look for your car can be handy for Live playing.

Designing your own look is all part of the *NFS* tradition, and there are plenty of vinyls to unlock and edit. Make sure your car is completely original – a bland looking car isn't going to be well remembered, and may cause a little titter.

The most important thing though, is to have the nitrous, as this makes all the distance in a tight race. The speedbreaker is also extremely useful, as it allows you to turn the tightest of corners at very high speed. Vroom!

CONTROL OR AFFORD IT, LOOK NO FURTHER FOR HELP...

Problems with a dog who just goes pee-pee anywhere and everywhere? Buy a load of flowers to have about the place. Hopefully your dog will go in them instead of your shiny floor. This also means your dog won't need washing quite so often.

If your pet keeps jumping out of the bath, then try and fill up their bladder and energy levels. A happier pet is going to make for a far more constructive and obedient pet. Especially if they're not desperate for the loo.

The Sims have always been fond of extracurricular activities, and *Sims Pets* is no different. Use a telescope at night to get abducted by aliens. Upon returning, you'll find you've unlocked special alien pet treats in your inventory.

Getting married is easy and has some real perks. Simply get your relationship with your chosen partner to 100 and they will accept your offer regardless of their mood (typical). Now, if you cruelly marry and then exhange a wealthy family for another and delete them, you'll end up with the money still.

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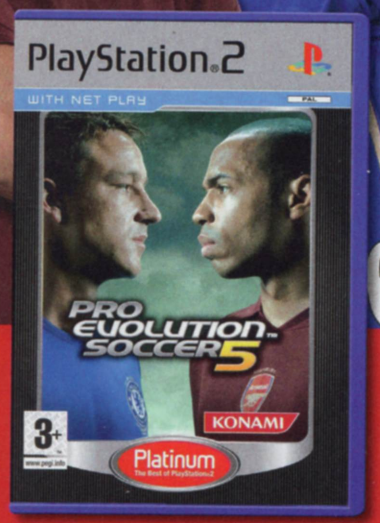

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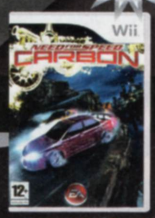

Which of these artists doesn't appear on the *NFS: Carbon* soundtrack?

A) GOLDFRAPP
B) LADY SOVEREIGN
C) THE WURZELS

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WIN! ERAGON

What fantasy creature does Eragon have as a friend?

A) A FLYING PIG
B) A DRAGON
C) A DINOSAUR

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WII-DAY LANDINGS

The middle-child of the next generation is here – Nintendo Wii. Good news for everyone who managed to get their hands on one and for home improvement shops everywhere (think of all that polyfilla and super-glue needed to patch up Wii remote-related accidents).

But what about if you were number 103 in the pre-order queue at a shop which only got 102 Wiis in? Or your mum/girlfriend's said your Sega Mega CD has to last you another year...?

Thanks to the kindly souls at Ubisoft, we're giving you lot a chance to see in the New Year with a new console. They might be in short supply, but Ubisoft have magicked us up four consoles to give away and each comes complete with a brilliant array of Ubisoft's top launch games. *GT Pro Series* is the first proper racing game for Wii complete with 80 licensed cars and a ton of tuning options for petrol-heads. *Monster 4x4 World Circuit* is a dirtier prospect with big trucks, explosions and manic races. Both fully utilise the Wii's remote so you'll be twisting and turning in your seat and not even being mocked for it by your mates. You'll also bag yourself the animal magic of *Open Season* and the party-tastic *Rayman: Raving Rabbids*.

Four lucky readers will receive a Wii and games – to be in with a chance of being one of them, just answer this question and get your answer to us by the 17th of January.

Monster trucks are known for having large what?

a) Wheels
b) Seats
c) Drivers

3 WAYS TO ENTER:

1. WRITE TO US

Scribble your answers on the form, cut it out, stuff it into an envelope and send it to Wii Love It compo, GamesMaster, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

2. EMAIL US

Email your answers, with your name, address, age and telephone number, to gamesmastercompo@futurenet.co.uk

3. TEXT US

Just text QUIZ1 (space) A, B or C to 80889*. Main comp is 50p plus standard charge.

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WIN! WWE: SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007

Which of these objects turn up frequently in WWE matches?

A) LADDERS
B) HAMMERS
C) UMBRELLAS

5 COPIES TO BE WON

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WIN! HAPPY FEET

Which of these things can a penguin do?

A) FLY
B) BREATHE UNDERWATER
C) SWIM

5 COPIES TO BE WON

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WIN! THRILLVILLE

Which country is home to the tallest roaster coaster in the world?

A) LAS VEGAS
B) SCOTLAND
C) GREENLAND

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- GT Pro Series!
- Monster 4x4 World Circuit!
- Rayman: Raving Rabbids!
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Cut it out and send it in!

ENTER HERE!

Tick the boxes next to the correct answers, write down your details and send us the coupon by January 17th 2007. Or, if you don't want to mess up your precious magazine, simply write down your answers on a bit of paper or postcard. Or even a stuck-down envelope.

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MAIN COMPO
Monster trucks are known for having large what?
☐ a) Wheels
☐ b) Seats
☐ c) Drivers

NEED FOR SPEED: CARBON
Which of these artists doesn't appear on the *NFS: Carbon* soundtrack?
☐ a) Goldfrapp
☐ b) Lady Sovereign
☐ c) The Wurzels

ERAGON
What fantasy creature does Eragon have as a friend?
☐ a) A flying pig
☐ b) A dragon
☐ c) A dinosaur

WWE: SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007
Which of these objects turn up frequently in WWE matches?
☐ a) Ladders
☐ b) Hammers
☐ c) Umbrellas

HAPPY FEET
Which of these things can a penguin do?
☐ a) Fly
☐ b) Breathe underwater
☐ c) Swim

THRILLVILLE
Which country is home to the tallest roaster coaster in the world?
☐ a) Las Vegas
☐ b) Scotland
☐ c) Greenland

Send to

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MERCURY MELTDOWN: Ian Mullett, Portsmouth; Racheal Hinsella, Coventry; Sophie Cockrell, Norfolk; Sagar, Midex Hayes; Daniel Medhurst, Leicester

PIPA 07: Harry Harrison, Shropshire; Richard Bebbington, Cheshire; Craig Goodfellow, Staffs; Luke Mayhew, Kent; Lynne B. Walker, Gateshead

NINETY-NINE NIGHTS: Alice Mayhew, Kent; Danielle Allum, Brighton; Andrew Stocks, Surrey; T Van Beck, Notts; Donald Ridley, Dorset

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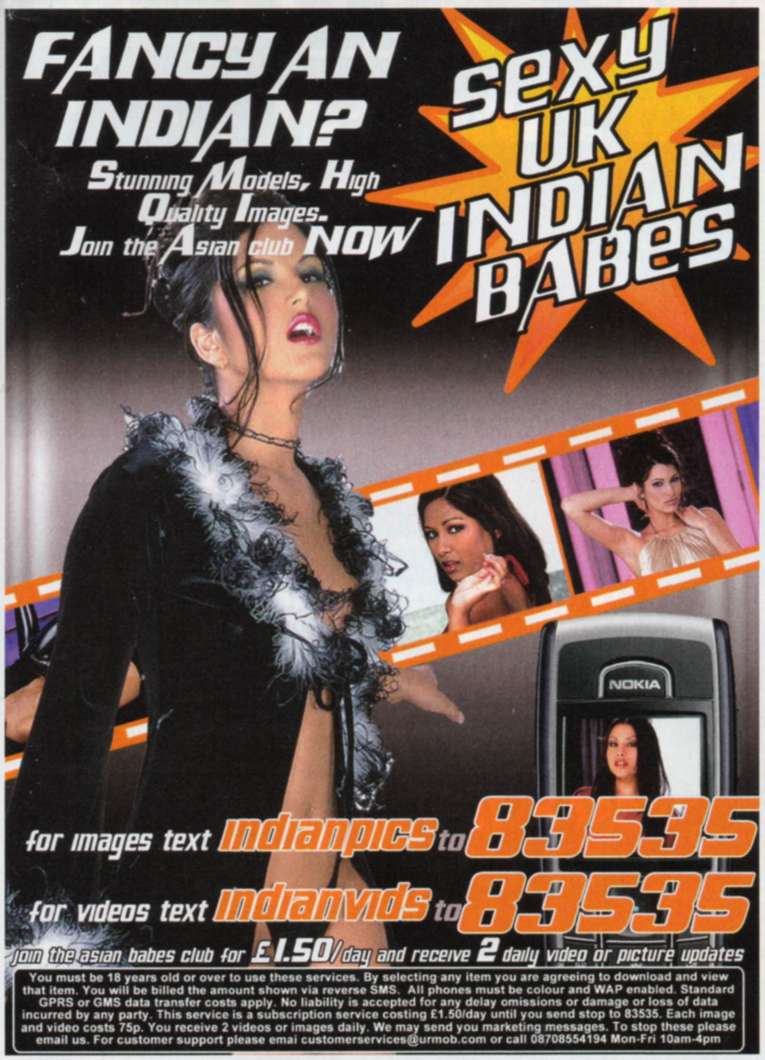

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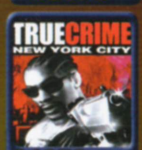

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